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The parasitoid complex of *Euxoa ochrogaster* (Guenée).

(Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)

by



Allan Clarence Schaaf

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled The parasitoid complex of *Euxoa ochrogaster* (Guenée). (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) submitted by Allan Clarence Schaaf in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.



Abstract

The parasitoid complex of *Euxoa ochrogaster* (Guenée) was studied with regard to the identification of the immature stages of the parasitoids. The biology and hosts of each parasitoid are reviewed from literature records and from original research.

Twenty-seven species of parasitoids have been recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. Three of these records are not valid because they are based on misidentifications. Descriptions of the available immature stages of fifteen species are provided. Of the remaining species, four had been previously described, two could not be studied because of taxonomic difficulties, and three more could not be studied because no material was available for study.

A brief discussion of the host specificity and the role of the parasitoids in regulating *E. ochrogaster* populations is given. The implications of this study and suggestions for further work are given.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Procedures and reviews	3
2.1 Materials and methods	3
2.2 Biology of <i>E. ochrogaster</i> (Guenée)	5
2.3 Predators, diseases, and non-insect parasitoids	9
2.3.1 Predators	9
2.3.2 Diseases	10
2.3.3 Non-insect parasitoids	10
3. Parasitoids	11
3.1 Tachinidae	11
3.1.1 The morphology of immature tachinids	11
3.1.2 <i>Gonia</i> Meigen	13
3.1.3 <i>Bonnetia comta</i> (Fallén)	20
3.1.4 <i>Periscepsia</i> Gistel	22
3.2 Bombyliidae	28
3.2.1 Biology and morphology of immature bombyliids	28
3.2.2 <i>Villa</i> Lioy	30
3.2.3 <i>Poecilanthrax</i> Osten Sacken	31
3.3 Ichneumonidae	33
3.3.1 Morphology of immature ichneumonids	33
3.3.2 Ichneumonini	33
3.3.3 <i>Eutanyacra suturalis</i> (Say)	34
3.3.4 <i>Spilichneumon superbus</i> (Provancher)	36
3.3.5 <i>Pseudamblyteles subfuscus</i> (Cresson)	37

3.3.6	<i>Diphyus</i> #1	38
3.3.7	<i>Campoletis atkinsoni</i> (Viereck)	38
3.3.8	<i>Netelia</i> Gray	42
3.3.9	<i>Gravenhorstia propinqua</i> (Cresson).....	44
3.4	Braconidae	46
3.4.1	Morphology of immature braconids	46
3.4.2	Microgastrinae	46
3.4.3	<i>Apanteles</i>	46
3.4.4	<i>Microplitis kewleyi</i> Musesebeck	51
3.4.5	<i>Meteorus</i> Haliday	52
3.5	Encyrtidae	57
3.5.1	<i>Copidosoma bakeri</i> (Howard)	57
3.6	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupal remains	64
4.	Discussion	67
4.1	Further research needed	70
4.2	Alternative hosts	72
4.3	Regulation of <i>E. ochrogaster</i> populations by parasitoids	72
4.3.1	Economic benefits of parasitoids	75
4.4	Future research	77
5.	References	79

List of Tables

Table I	Summary of the biology of <i>E. ochrogaster</i> parasitoids	68
Table II	The estimated mortality caused by the species of parasitoids reared from <i>E. ochrogaster</i> at Calahoo, Alberta in 1967 and 1968	75

List of Figures

	<u>Page</u>
Fig. 1. Posterior view of tachinid puparium	17
Fig. 2. Cephalopharyngeal structures of third instar tachinid larva	17
Fig. 3. Side view of posterior tachinid spiracle	17
Fig. 4. Dorsal view of puparium	17
Fig. 5. Cephalopharyngeal structures of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i> species #1	17
Fig. 6. Cephalopharyngeal structures of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i> species #2	17
Fig. 7. Anterior spiracle of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	17
Fig. 8. Anterior spiracle of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	17
Fig. 9. Posterior spiracle of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	17
Fig. 10. Posterior view of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i> puparium	19
Fig. 11. Spine pattern of <i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	19
Fig. 12. Second instar <i>Gonia aldrichi</i> larva	19
Fig. 13. Cephalopharyngeal structures of second instar larva	19
Fig. 14. Cephalopharyngeal structures of <i>Gonia sequax</i>	19
Fig. 15. Posterior spiracle of <i>Gonia sequax</i>	19
Fig. 16. Anterior spiracle of <i>Gonia sequax</i>	19
Fig. 17. Spine pattern of <i>Gonia sequax</i> puparium	19
Fig. 18. Cephalopharyngeal structures of <i>Bonnetia comta</i>	27
Fig. 19. Posterior spiracle of <i>Bonnetia comta</i>	27
Fig. 20. Anterior spiracle of <i>Bonnetia comta</i>	27

Fig. 21.	Posterior view of puparium of <i>Bonnetia comta</i>	27
Fig. 22.	Puparium of <i>Bonnetia comta</i>	27
Fig. 23.	Cephalopharyngeal structures of <i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	27
Fig. 24.	Puparium of <i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	27
Fig. 25.	Anterior spiracle of <i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	27
Fig. 26.	Posterior spiracle of <i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	27
Fig. 27.	Posterior spiracle of <i>Periscepsia laevigata</i>	27
Fig. 28.	Anterior spiracle of <i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	27
Fig. 29.	Pupa of <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i>	32
Fig. 30.	Ventral view of pupal head of <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i>	32
Fig. 31.	Ventro-lateral view of posterior end of pupa of <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i>	32
Fig. 32.	Final instar larva of <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i>	32
Fig. 33.	Spine and setal patterns of <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i> pupal third abdominal segment	32
Fig. 34.	Generalized cephalic structures of final instar ichneumonid larva	39
Fig. 35.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Eutanyacra suturalis</i>	39
Fig. 36.	Ichneumonine larva	39
Fig. 37.	Larval spiracle of <i>Spilichneumon superbus</i>	39
Fig. 38.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Diphyus</i> #1	39
Fig. 39.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Siplichneumon superbus</i>	39
Fig. 40.	Cocoon of <i>Campoletis atkinsoni</i>	40
Fig. 41.	Cocoon of <i>Netelia</i> sp.	40

Fig. 42.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Compoletis atkinsoni</i>	50
Fig. 43.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Gravenhorstia propingua</i>	50
Fig. 44.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	50
Fig. 45.	Cocoon mass of <i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	50
Fig. 46.	Individual cocoon of <i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	50
Fig. 47.	Penultimate larva of <i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	50
Fig. 48.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Apanteles griffini</i>	56
Fig. 49.	Cocoon mass of <i>Apanteles griffini</i>	56
Fig. 50.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Microplitis kewleyi</i>	56
Fig. 51.	Cocoon of <i>Microplitis kewleyi</i>	56
Fig. 52.	Cephalic structures of final instar larva of <i>Meteorus vulgaris</i>	56
Fig. 53.	Final instar larva of <i>Meteorus vulagris</i>	56
Fig. 54.	Cocoon mass of <i>Meteorus vulgaris</i>	56
Fig. 55.	Cocoon of <i>Meteorus vulgaris</i>	56
Fig. 56.	Feeding larva of <i>Copidosoma bakeri</i>	66
Fig. 57.	Prepupa of <i>Copidosoma bakeri</i>	66
Fig. 58.	Cross section of host after completion <i>Copidosoma bakeri</i> feeding	66
Fig. 59.	Surface view of host completion of <i>Copidosoma bakeri</i> feeding	66

Fig. 60.	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa before emergence of moth	66
Fig. 61.	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa after emergence of moth	66
Fig. 62	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa after <i>Gonia</i> spp. emergence	66
Fig. 63	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa after <i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i> emergence	66
Fig. 64.	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa after ichneumonine emergence	66
Fig. 65.	<i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> pupa after <i>Gravenhorstia propingua</i> emergence	66
Fig. 66.	The parasitoid complex of <i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i>	66
Fig. 67.	The decline of the <i>Euxoa ochrogaster</i> population at Calahoo, Alberta, in the summer of 1968.	

1. Introduction

The red-backed cutworm, *Euxoa ochrogaster* (Guenée) is a well-known, destructive ground cutworm native to the prairie provinces of Canada. The purpose of this study is to provide a method of identifying some of the immature stages of the parasitoids of the red-backed cutworm. Some groups of parasitoids are very difficult to identify to species as adults but may be identified using morphological or behavioural characters of the immature stages. The advantages of recognizing the immature stages of the parasitoids of any host species are as follows:

1. If research with live adult parasitoids is necessary, identification using the remains of the immature stages prevents damage to the living specimens.
2. It is not necessary to rear either the host or the parasitoids to maturity to obtain data on the host-parasitoid relations. This allows analysis of host specimens which died due to uncontrollable mortality, and of hosts purposely killed to enlarge a sample size where time was not adequate to rear all the hosts or parasitoids to maturity.
3. Super-, hyper-, or multiple parasitoid attack can usually be recognized only by the dissection of host material before any of the parasitoids can mature and emerge. Analysis of inter-specific and intra-specific competition of parasitoids as well as the interactions with predators and disease is possible from the results of such dissections.

The term parasitoid is used in this paper rather than parasite which is usually used when referring to entomophagous groups which attack single host units. The need for the term parasitoid arises from the fact that ecologically the action of such entomophagous species is different from that of either predators or true parasites. Doutt (1964) outlined

the ways in which parasitoids differ from parasites. They are:

1. the development of an individual destroys its host;
2. the host is usually of the same taxonomic class;
3. in comparison with their hosts they are of relatively large size;
4. they are parasitic as larvae only, the adults being free-living forms;
5. they do not exhibit heteroecism;
6. as a parameter in population dynamics their action resembles that of predators more than that of true parasites.

2. Procedures and reviews

2.1 Materials and methods

The research for this paper was started during the summer of 1967 in conjunction with the work of Dr. J.H. Frank (in press, *a,b*) on the predator complex attacking *E. ochrogaster*. The field research was carried out at Calahoo, Alberta on the farm of Mr. C. Bergstreiser. The land location of the field site was South-west 8, Township 55 - Range 27: West 4th Meridian. This site was first investigated June 22, 1967 following a report of a cutworm outbreak to the Alberta Department of Agriculture. The outbreak was limited in both cutworm numbers and in area attacked and little damage was caused. Most of the cutworms were in the final instar. The center of the outbreak was used as a test area and the balance of the field was sprayed with insecticide. Though quantitative studies were not carried out, the test plot appeared to have as healthy a stand at harvest as the sprayed area. It is likely that the use of insecticide was unnecessary. During the spring and summer of 1968, plots were established in an oat field adjacent to the barley field in which the outbreak had occurred the year before. The oat field had been summer-fallowed the year before. Cutworms were collected in two types of pitfall traps: 3.05 m. x 0.12 m. eavestroughs and plastic containers 8.7 cm. diameter at the top x 10.2 cm. depth, by hand collecting, and by systematic sieving of quadrat samples. The numbers of cutworms captured were higher than the season before but were inadequate for a meaningful population study of either the host or its parasitoids. All live hosts were reared in both 1967 and 1968. A small number of cutworms was collected in 1969 at Calahoo using 3.05 m. eavestroughs as pitfall traps.

These traps were placed in the same field as in 1968 but were spread over a much larger area. These traps were primarily used by Dr. R. Gooding to capture carabid beetles. The cutworms collected in 1969 were preserved for further study.

In addition to the *E. ochrogaster* population at Calahoo, I studied a small outbreak of the black army cutworm, *Actebia fennica* (Tauscher) at Worsley, Alberta, 420 miles north-west of Edmonton (Section 8, Township 87 - Range 7: West 6th Meridian). The study was discontinued after the *E. ochrogaster* outbreak at Calahoo was reported.

Captured cutworms were reared in the laboratory in individual plastic petri dishes. Each dish was provided with moist filter paper and fresh dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* Weber) leaves on at least every second day. The dishes were changed when feces had badly contaminated the filter paper. To prevent or reduce the spread of disease in the laboratory new dishes were used as much as possible or the old dishes were sterilized with a KOH solution. Forceps used to handle specimens were rinsed in 95% ethyl alcohol after each specimen was handled. Dishes infested with mites were changed but mites were still a serious source of mortality in laboratory reared cutworms. Specimens were reared in a controlled temperature cabinet at between 18 and 21° C. All specimens which were found dead in the field (usually drowned) and most of those which died in the laboratory were preserved in 70% ethyl alcohol. Some of the hosts which showed obvious stages of parasitoid attack were killed and stored in alcohol for further study. All hosts which failed to produce either adults or parasitoids were checked by dissection for evidence of parasitoid attack.

The basic parasitoid list was formed using three sources of information.

A literature review was carried out to establish all the recorded parasitoids. The three best sources of information were King and Atkinson (1928), Thompson (1945), and Graham (1965). Specimens of adult parasitoids which had been reared in my study were compared with known specimens or were identified by Dr. Mason or Dr. Peck of the Canadian National Collection. The final source of information was the host labels on reared specimens in the Canadian National Collection. The host labels aided by allowing me to find specimens which had originally been recorded at the generic level only, or which were not previously recorded at all.

Specimens of most of the species studied were borrowed from the Canadian National Collection (C.N.C.). The only bombyliid personally examined was *Poecilanthrax alcyon* (Say). The only other parasitoid species which I did not borrow specimens of was *Copidosoma bakeri* (Howard).

The methods of differentiating species and the preparation of the specimens for study will be discussed in the sections dealing with each family of parasitoids.

2.2 Biology of *Euxoa ochrogaster*

The red-backed cutworm was ranked by King (1926) as being one of the most serious agricultural pests in the prairie provinces. Damage due to cutworms was estimated to be over \$4,000,000 in Saskatchewan in 1925, and in one area crops were reduced by one-quarter (King, 1926). Hardwick (1965) gives the range as from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island; in the northern United States; in the mountains as far south as Colorado; and north to James Bay in the east, and Unalakleet, Alaska in the west. King (1926) stated that *E. ochrogaster* had been reported in every province in Canada.

E. ochrogaster was first described by Guenée in 1841 as *Noctua ochrogaster*. Hardwick (1965) places *E. ochrogaster* in the *ochrogaster* group of *Euxoa* with a new species, *E. wirima*. *E. wirima* was described from the Yukon and the western Northwest Territories where it occurs sympatrically with *E. ochrogaster*. Hardwick provides descriptions and illustrations of the size, coloration, and male and female genitalia of the adults of both species.

The biology of *E. ochrogaster* was first described by King (1926) but more detail was given by a co-worker, McMillan (1930). Jacobson (1970) provides data based on laboratory experiments on the rearing of this species.

The eggs of *E. ochrogaster* are usually laid in dry, loose, light or medium soil, just under the surface (King, 1926). The egg-laying period usually begins in mid-August and extends into September. The duration of this period depends on the type of season and especially the severity of fall weather. The eggs begin development almost immediately after being laid. When a fully developed larva can be seen through the chorion of the egg, the larva is capable of movement if removed; this is commonly referred to as the black-egg stage. Jacobson (1970) showed that the duration of this developmental period is related to the incubation temperature. His finding that complete development occurs in 20 days at 15°C. corresponds to the three week development period stated by McMillan (1930) (no rearing conditions were stated). Once the egg has developed to this point, it enters into a strongly developed diapause which requires prolonged cold to be broken. Jacobson found 5°C. to be the optimum diapause breaking temperature.

Though Strickland (1923) claimed that the larvae sometimes hatch in

the fall, King (1926), McMillan (1930), and Jacobson (1970) state that hatching occurs only in the spring. McMillan sets the hatch as beginning about April 15 in the Saskatoon, Saskatchewan region. This would occur only in a very early spring in the Edmonton region.

The larvae of *E. ochrogaster* normally pass through six instars but at high temperatures (i.e. 30°C.) only five instars are found (Jacobson, 1970). The presence of the parasitoid *Copidosoma bakeri* may cause a seventh larval instar (McMillan, 1930, pers. obs.). I have occasionally observed red-backed cutworms in laboratory cultures which passed through only five instars, and these were all reared at above 25°C.

According to King (1926), the larvae of *E. ochrogaster* feed chiefly at night by crawling along the soil surface and chewing through the bases of food plants. Some burrow beside a plant, cut it off, and continue to feed on it for a few days if it remains fresh. On warm nights most of the cutworms come to the surface and crawl about feeding. This species shows no tendency to form armies, and even in high densities the movements of individuals seem to be independent. At Calahoo, it was observed that the highest pitfall catches usually occurred after a warm night following rain. The feeding habits of the red-backed cutworm have been exploited by previous workers for control with poison baits.

The presence of the cutworms is usually not noticed until the fourth or fifth instar, or even later if the populations are small. It is at this point that the larvae are actively feeding and causing noticeable damage to crops. The outbreak is usually discovered when the farmer notices an exceptionally poor stand of seedling grain or a sudden deterioration of a well-started stand of grain. At Calahoo, where the cutworm population was very small and limited in 1967, the outbreak was noticed

during a routine check of the amount of grain which had sprouted, and cutworms were noticed crawling on the soil surface. While King (1926) sets the normal latest date for finding red-backed cutworms as the end of June in Saskatchewan, in both 1968 and 1969 they were collected until mid-July at Calahoo. The numbers were greatly reduced in the last two weeks in both summers.

The pupae are normally found in packed earth cells slightly larger than the pupae they contain. The pupal period in the field is 3 to 4 weeks. In the laboratory, specimens kept at 21°C. have a pupal stage lasting 16 to 24 days.

The moths normally first appear in late July and live for several weeks. Hardwick (1965) examined specimens which were collected between early July and mid-September. The mating and oviposition habits are summarized by Jacobson (1970). In the laboratory, he found an average preoviposition period of eight days. McMillan (1930), on the contrary, claimed a preoviposition period of fourteen days with a minimum time of eight days, but it is not known under what conditions or temperatures McMillan did his research. The duration of the preoviposition period could be critical to the parasitoid *Copidosoma bakeri* (see *C. bakeri* section). McMillan and King both reported that *E. ochrogaster* females were capable of laying more than 1000 eggs. Basing his statement on eight moths, McMillan found an average of 1178 eggs per female. Jacobson, on the other hand, found an average of 411 eggs per female with the highest number 705. In my attempts to rear this species, I never obtained more than 50 eggs per female and usually far less.

The females oviposit and feed chiefly at night. They are not attracted to light (King, 1926) and hence are difficult to collect as

adults. During the day they hide under soil clods, debris, or in dense grass where it is quite dark. Because of the high egg potential of this species, the weather during the oviposition period is likely critical to outbreak size the following year. Ideal weather would allow even a small adult population to lay a large number of eggs and create a potential outbreak for the following season.

2.3 Predators, diseases, and non-insect parasitoids

2.3.1 Predators. The immature stages of *E. ochrogaster* serve as prey for many different species of predators. King and Atkinson (1928) observed *Calosoma calidum* Fab. attacking large red-backed cutworms and *Bembidion fuscicolum* Mots feeding on young red-backed cutworms. They found the larvae of a therevid, *Psilocephala munda* Loew, feeding on recently killed, large, red-backed cutworms. They found that the brown ant *Lasius neoniger* Emery feeds on *E. ochrogaster* eggs. The only important vertebrate found by King and Atkinson to attack the red-backed cutworm was Franklin's gull (*Larus pipixcan* Wagler). During my study, I found a lycosid spider, *Trochosa terricola* Thorell, which killed many cutworms trapped in pitfall traps. From its ability to kill even the largest cutworms, it is likely an important predator at Calahoo.

The carabid predators of *E. ochrogaster* were studied extensively by Dr. J.H. Frank (in press, a.). He found 50 species of carabids at the Calahoo field site, all of which appeared to be potential predators of cutworm eggs. The most important were *Bembidion* spp., especially *B. quadrimaculatum* L. Predators of late instar cutworms were *Carabus taedatus* F., *C. serratus* Say, *Calosoma calidum* F., *Pterosticus lucublandus* Say, *P. adstrictus* Esch., *Harpulus amputatus* Say, and *H. funerarius* Csiki.

He found the two *Pterostichus* spp. and *Harpalus amputatus* to be the most important predators. Predators of the early instar cutworms were the same as those of the late instars but also included *Amara torrida* Pz. and *A. avida* Say. Finally, he found that the predators of the pupae were much the same as those of the later instars.

2.3.2 Diseases. King and Atkinson (1928) reported bacterial disease as being an important source of larval mortality during periods of wet, warm weather. They thought the disease was *Bacillus noctuarius* (Wh.) although they never had it identified. Graham (1965) states that the disease likely was caused by *Serratia marcescens* Bizio. I did not have disease attacking the cutworms which I studied identified. Most cutworms which died turned a pale pink color about two days before death. At death the specimen was brownish and the contents were a non-structured brownish-white. Disease was a major source of laboratory mortality during my 1968 study. The role of disease as a controlling agent of *E. ochrogaster* needs careful study.

2.3.3 Non-insect parasitoids. The only non-insect parasitoid found attacking the red-backed cutworm was a single nematode. It was reared from a fifth-instar red-backed cutworm in late June in 1969 from material collected at Calahoo. This specimen was examined by Dr. H.E. Welch, who states that it probably belongs to the genus *Agamermis* Cobb, Steiner, and Cristie. Positive identification was not possible because the specimen was immature.

3. Parasitoids

3.1 Tachinidae

3.1.1 The morphology of immature tachinids. The morphology of the structures of the final instar larvae and puparia of tachinids, as well as other higher Diptera, is poorly understood. A recent work by Menees (1962) offers an explanation of the origins of the cephalopharyngeal structures of the various larval instars. In his work he shows that the mouth-hooks are chiefly maxillary in origin, and that beyond the first instar there is no evidence of vestigial mandibular structures. Various authors describing these structures use different terminologies which assume different origins of the structures (Zuska, 1963; Sanjean, 1957). Others based their terminologies on convenient names (Finlayson, 1960). The system which I use is outlined in figures 1-4 and includes arbitrary terms not based on any morphological assumptions.

The final instar tachinid larva has twelve segments, but the puparium has only eleven due to the invagination of the pseudocephalon and part of the first thoracic segment when the larval skin becomes the puparium (Zuska, 1963). This leaves the cephalopharyngeal structures lying in the immediate anterior end of the puparium, attached to part of the unsclerotized final instar larval skin. Horizontal and vertical sutures in the puparium release when the adult emerges. The flaps which are formed at emergence are connected at their midpoints to the rest of the puparium. The dorsal flap, carrying the anterior spiracles, often is lost. The ventral flap is less often lost and contains the cephalopharyngeal structures.

The puparium retains many of the characters of the final instar larva. One of these characters is the patterns of spinules. Zuska (1963) states

that these patterns may vary due to different hosts and other factors, and that thus is not a good taxonomic character.

Colour is often used as a character in the description of the puparium (Greene, 1921; Strickland, 1923), but as pointed out by Zuska (1963) and from personal observation, the variation is too great for it to be of much use.

The most reliable puparium characters to work with are the posterior spiracles. Unfortunately, the difference between closely related species is not always sufficient to differentiate them. Fig. 3 provides a general outline of the appearance of a posterior spiracle. While all of the species in this study had three orificia, some groups of tachinids have four or more. The cicatrix, remnants of the second instar spiracle, was evident in all specimens studied.

As the anterior spiracles are often lost, they are not a good character to base general classifications on. In addition, the number of openings or pori varies intraspecifically.

The cephalopharyngeal structures (Fig. 2) found inside the puparium are generally good characters, but the variability of some of the parts must be considered. Basically, the cephalopharyngeal structures are formed of three sclerites: the anterior, median, and posterior. These may be fused to their adjacent members so that only one or two sclerites are apparent and functional. The anterior parts appear to be very constant whereas the posterior portion may vary a great deal in shape or degree of sclerotization. As the posterior sclerite is the least sclerotized portion of the structure, it may be twisted or bent in such a way as to obscure its true appearance.

In addition to the basic three sclerites, one often finds additional

sclerites in some species. Sanjean (1957) offers names for three such sclerites in sarcophagid larvae, but there is no evidence to show which are present in my specimens. As the true origin of these sclerites is not known, I have called them auxiliary sclerites.

Occasionally while dissecting the host, one is able to find the cast cephalopharyngeal structures of earlier instars. These structures are difficult to find often enough to be of use in identifying a species.

3.1.2 Gonia Meigen. The concept of the genus *Gonia* has been reviewed by Tothill (1924), Morrison (1940), and Brooks (1943). Brooks regarded *Gonia* as being a composite of several genera which he separated and described. His work separated the species which I am considering into three genera: *Gonia* (*capitata*, *sequax*); *Reaumuria* (*aldrichi*), and *Fuscigonia* (*fuscicollis*). Sabrosky and Arnaud (1965) restore *Gonia* to its original concept, which will be used in this paper. As will be shown in the discussion of the species of this genus, more work is needed on their taxonomy.

The characteristics of *Gonia* puparia are as follows. The puparia are robust, larger than 9 mm. in length, and are patterned or completely covered with spinules. The posterior spiracles are large, protruding, and heavily sclerotized while the anterior spiracles are diverse in character. The anal protuberance is small and insignificant. The cephalopharyngeal structure is two articulated with the anterior and median sclerites being fused. The dorsal anterior portion of the posterior sclerite forms an arm which projects forward to the anterior sclerite. A sclerotized band of different widths surrounds the inner angle between the dorsal and ventral processes of the posterior sclerite. The entire structure of the cephalopharyngeal apparatus has a triangular form with the lines of the anterior-median and posterior sclerites being nearly straight.

The females of this genus typically lay their eggs on vegetation which may be eaten by host larvae. The eggs hatch in the host gut and the larvae penetrate into the body cavity. The larvae develop to the second instar in the host larva and complete development after the host pupates. The puparium is found in the host pupa. Strickland (1923) provides a detailed account of the life-cycle of a species he called *Gonia capitata*. King and Atkinson (1928) did not differentiate between three species of *Gonia* which they found but stated that as a group, they tended to select plants which were most likely to be eaten by host cutworms. None of these authors believed that *Gonia* species would ever show a high effective rate of parasitism in *E. ochrogaster* populations as has been found with *Agrotis orthogonia* Morrison populations.

3.1.2.1 *Gonia aldrichi* Tothill—King and Atkinson (1928) recorded *Gonia aldrichi* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. They stated that *aldrichi* is the most important parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* in the genus *Gonia* and is widely distributed in Saskatchewan. It appears that at least two species are currently included in the concept of *G. aldrichi* and both have been reared from *E. ochrogaster*. These species will be designated here as *G. aldrichi* #1 and *G. aldrichi* #2.

Description of puparia. The puparia are similar in both of these species. The exit hole from the host pupa is a transverse, irregular break across the head of the pupa (fig. 62). After the adult has emerged, the break is usually only slightly open except in the unusual cases where the anterior region of the host pupa is broken off. The posterior spiracles (fig. 9) are large and the orificial ridges are high and prominent. The orificial ridges occur very close to the edge of the spiracular plate and the ventral ridge often appears continuous with the

edge. The cicatrix is usually poorly developed but varies in size and prominence from specimen to specimen. Spinules cover most of the puparium in indistinct bands. The spinules occur singly, and are randomly distributed (fig. 11). The anterior spiracles have two very different shapes, one of which consists of two or three pori on a distinct pedicel (fig. 8), and the other with 12 or more pori (fig. 7) surrounding and partially obscuring the pedicel. The difference in anterior spiracle shape could not be correlated to other characters. Also, the number of pori vary on the same specimen though never from one type to the other.

Description of larvae. The main difference between the two species lies in the shape of the cephalopharyngeal structures. The entire structure of *G. aldrichi* #1 (fig. 5) is a wider triangle than that of *G. aldrichi* #2 (fig. 6). The angle between the dorsal and ventral arms of the posterior sclerite is greater in #1 than in #2. The inner angle of #1 is only lightly, if at all sclerotized, whereas in #2 a definite band of up to one-quarter the width of the dorsal arm extends around the inner angle from near the tip of the dorsal arm to past the widened area of the lower arm. The lower arm of #1 lacks any definite widening along its length. The fused anterior and median sclerite of #1 is shorter than that of #2. The blade of the mouth hooks of #2 has a definite S-curve shape whereas in #1 the curve is a simple arc. The overall sizes of #1 and #2 are similar.

The second instar larvae of *Gonia* sp. (fig. 12) were found in my dissections of dead host larvae. As the puparia and cephalopharyngeal structures of all the reared specimens were similar to the two *G. aldrichi* species, it is safe to call these second instar larvae *G. aldrichi* also. The cephalopharyngeal structures of these larvae are fused into a single

sclerite (fig. 13). The larva is 5 to 6 mm. long, curved ventrally and patterned by black papillae. The patterns of papillae were not constant.

Biology. While no adults were obtained from reared specimens in my study, several puparia were found in reared host pupae. The reared *Gonia* puparia compared favorably with borrowed specimens. It is likely that faulty rearing conditions caused the failure of adult emergence. During the dissection of dead host larvae, five specimens were found to contain from one to five second instar *Gonia* larvae. In one of these host larvae, two of the five *Gonia* larvae were damaged and partially disintegrated, while in another only the cephalopharyngeal structures of a larva were found, as well as a healthy *Gonia* larva.

Hosts. Specimens of *G. aldrichi* examined were reared from *E. ochrogaster* and *A. orthogonia*.

3.1.2.2 *Gonia capitata* (De Geer)—*Gonia capitata* was recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* by Strickland (1923). Strickland noted that this could be a mistaken identification and that the species studied could be divided into five groups. It is now recognized that *G. capitata* is exclusively a European species (Brooks, 1943; Arnaud and Sabrosky, 1965). This invalidates the figures and descriptions of Greene (1921). The biological work of Strickland must now be regarded as being of *Gonia* sp. but is nevertheless a valuable source of information.

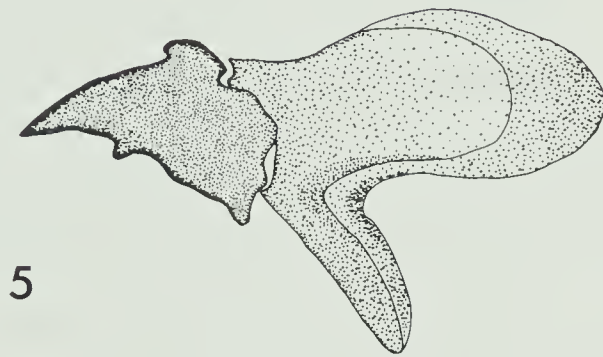
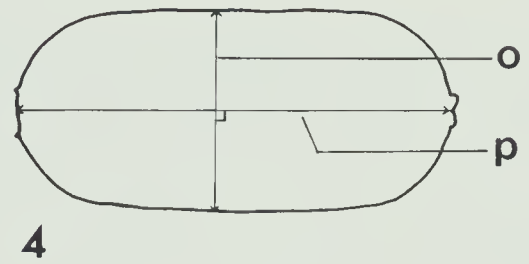
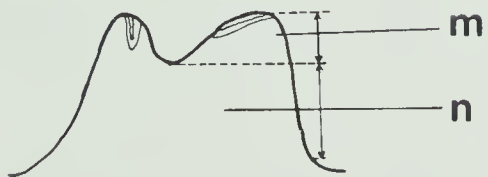
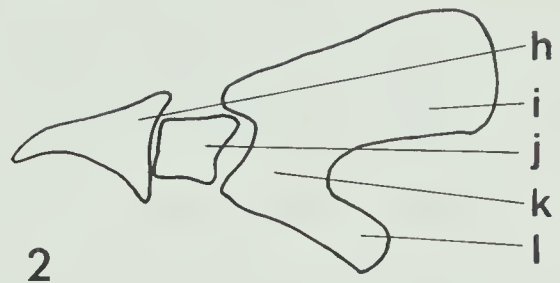
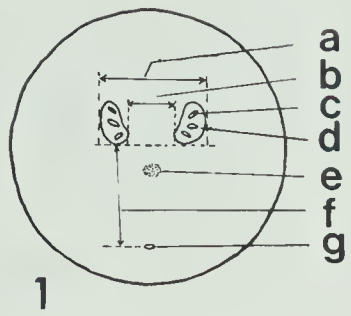
3.1.2.3 *Gonia fuscicollis* Tothill—*Gonia fuscicollis* was recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* by King and Atkinson (1928). Brooks (1943) regarded this species as being so different from the other species of *Gonia* that he created the genus *Fuscigonia* for it. Unfortunately, no specimens were available for study.

Nothing is known of the biology of this species and it is likely

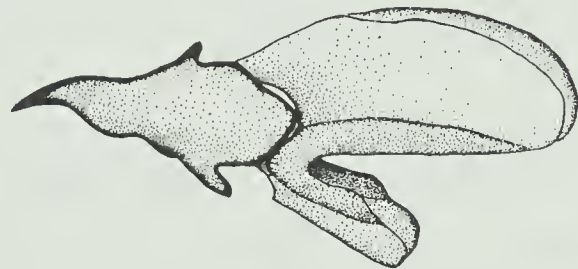
Figs. 1-4. Morphology of immature tachinids. 1. posterior view of puparium. 2. cephalopharyngeal structures of third instar larva. 3. side view of posterior spiracle (from Zuska, 1963). 4. dorsal view of puparium.

Figs. 5-8. *Gonia aldrichi*. 5. cephalopharyngeal structures of species #1. 6. species #2. 7 and 8 anterior spiracles. a, maximum distance between posterior spiracles; b, minimum distance between posterior spiracles; c, orificium; d. spiracular plate; e, supraanal protuberance; f, distance of anus from posterior spiracles; g, anus; h, anterior sclerite; i, dorsal process of posterior sclerite; j, median sclerite; k, posterior sclerite; l, ventral arm of posterior sclerite; m, orificial ridge; n, stigmatophore; o, width of puparium, p, length of puparium.

Scales in millimeters.



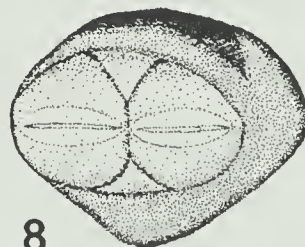
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that it is not an important parasitoid of any of the economic cutworms. The description of the immature stages is necessary in the future, however, to help separate the large number of species in this genus.

3.1.2.4 *Gonia sequax* Williston—*Gonia sequax* has not been recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. I am including *G. sequax* in this study as I am sure that it is a potential, if not actual parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster*, as well as to represent the *capitata* species group (Brooks, 1943).

Description of puparia. The puparium of *G. sequax* is very similar to that of *G. aldrichi* in size and shape. The posterior spiracles (fig. 15) differ in that the orificial ridges are set further in from the edge of the spiracular plate than those of *G. aldrichi*. The orificial ridges enclose the cicatrix which is fairly prominent. The anterior spiracles (fig. 16) have only one porus on the end of a long pedicel. Only one specimen was examined so that this may not be characteristic of all members of this species. The spination of the puparia differs sharply from that of *G. aldrichi*. The spines (fig. 17) tend to be in groups or series of three or more and often form long, irregular rows.

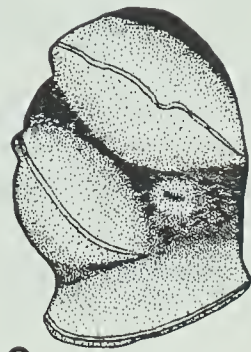
Description of larvae. The cephalopharyngeal structures (fig. 14) are similar to both *G. aldrichi* #1 and #2 but differ from both enough to be separated. The blade of the mouth hooks is a simple arc as in *G. aldrichi* #1 but the overall shape is closer to that of #2. Distinct from both *G. aldrichi* #1 and #2 is the anterior projection of the dorsal arm of the posterior sclerite. It is long, distinct, and well-developed, and usually has a large open space between it and the anterior-median sclerite.

Biology. Little is known of the biology of this species and how it differs from other members of the genus.

Figs. 9-13. *Gonia aldrichi*. 9. posterior spiracle. 10. posterior view of puparium. 11. spine pattern of puparium. 12. second instar larva. 13. cephalopharyngeal structures of second instar larva.

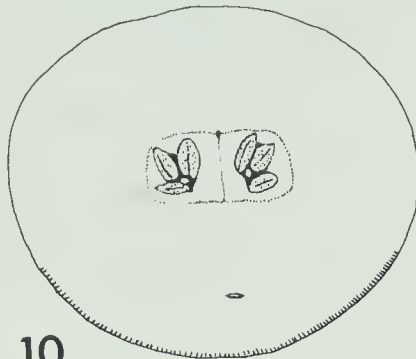
Figs. 14-17. *Gonia sequax*. 14. cephalopharyngeal structures. 15. posterior spiracle. 16. anterior spiracle (side view). 17. spine pattern of puparium.

Scale in millimeters.



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11

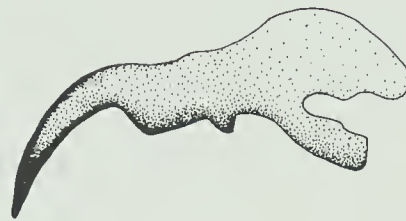
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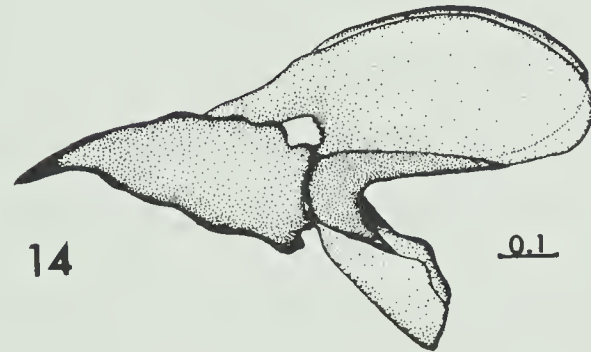
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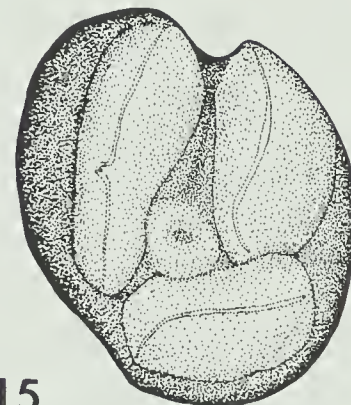


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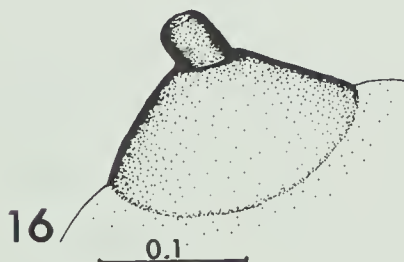
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Hosts. This species has been reared from *Agrotis orthogonia* from Alberta and Saskatchewan.

3.1.3 *Bonnetia comta* (Fallén). The puparia and posterior spiracles of *Bonnetia comta* were described by Greene (1921) and all the life stages including the above structures were described by Strickland (1923). Allen (1926) described the first instar larvae. Greene's drawings either are not clear enough or are of a different species than what is now called *B. comta*.

Description of puparia. The puparia are large, sub-elliptical, smooth-surfaced without any trace of spination, and show only vague segmentation marks (fig. 22). The anterior stigmata (fig. 20) are raised and show either five or six pori which are arranged in a curvilinear pattern with the axes of the individual pori pointing towards the center of the curve. Both the stigmatal plates and the supraanal protuberance are widely separated from the true anus and occur high on the dorsal surface of the puparium (fig. 21). The stigmatal plates of the posterior spiracles (fig. 19) are low and flat with the orificial ridges being only slightly raised but quite wide. The cicatrix is also low but is large and distinct. Occasionally, especially with transmitted light, a weakly sclerotized region can be seen between the inner and medial orificial ridges. The supraanal protuberance is pronounced and in some specimens is higher than are the stigmatal plates. From it runs a distinct ridge which separates the stigmatal plates.

Description of larvae. Strickland describes the life stages and gives figures for them. The following passage is taken from his paper to describe the final instar larvae, which I have not examined.

"The smallest specimen seen measures 12 mm. long and 4 mm. wide; the largest, which was almost mature, was 15.75 mm. by 4.25 mm. While living, the larvae that were dissected from their host constantly changed their shape by violent muscular contractions. The transparent cuticle revealed the yellow and brown viscera in strong contrast to the voluminous white fat-body. When killed ... the larva is arcuate, dorsum concave, tapering cephalad and slightly so to the bluntly rounded caudal extremity. Eleven segments, only, were seen. Dorso-laterally between segments I and II there are a pair of blackened spiracles ... each of which possesses six respiratory papillae that open into a short constricted felt-chamber, behind which are a pair of stout trachea which run the length of the body and connect with the caudal spiracles. The cuticle is almost destitute of armature, though minute simple spines are present on all of the intersegmental areas. These are most numerous in the anterior and posterior segments where they form a fine network of rows that encircle the body. In addition there are traces of intersegmental hooks between the four anterior segments. The buccal-pharyngeal armature ... differs little from that of the preceding stage except in size. The over-all measurement is 1.0 mm. to 1.1 mm., the mandibular hooks being 0.17 mm. to 0.18 mm. long."

Strickland's drawings of the cephalopharyngeal structures provide the appropriate general impressions but are inaccurate in one aspect. Ventral to the anterior sclerite lies an auxiliary sclerite as shown in fig. 18. This sclerite is always shown as being solidly fused to the anterior sclerite in Strickland's paper. I have examined twelve borrowed specimens and three slides which were part of Strickland's study and I am sure that my interpretation, which follows, is correct.

The posterior sclerite is very slightly sclerotized and while it has a characteristic shape, it is often twisted or bent in the puparium. The anterior process of this structure becomes progressively less sclerotized until it terminates in a ligament-like structure which connects with the posterior process of the anterior sclerite.

The articulation between the median and posterior sclerite is very weak and usually releases when the entire structure is being removed from the puparium. In contrast, the anterior articulation is very solid

and it is often difficult to find the division between the two sclerites except at the tip of the posterior process of the anterior sclerite.

Biology. The life history and behavior of *B. comta* is well outlined by Strickland (1923). This species belongs to the tachinids, which either larviposit or oviposit in an area where the first instar larvae can actively attach themselves to a host and enter from the outside of the body. Strickland found that the cutworms were attacked in the third or fourth instar and death resulted during the prepupal stage when the mature larva emerged to enter the soil and pupate.

Hosts. Two generations occur per year with the larvae of the second generation over-wintering in their hosts. The hosts recorded for this species in Strickland's paper are as follows: *Euxoa tristicula*, Montana; *E. messoria*, Washington; *Agrotis ypsilon*, California; *A. orthogonia*, Alberta; *Copablepharon viridisparsa*, Alberta; *Polia acutermis*, Alberta (induced parasitism). King and Atkinson (1928) recorded *B. comta* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* but found it to be an insignificant parasite during their studies in Saskatchewan.

3.1.4 *Periscepsia* Gistel. This genus has been handled in several different ways by various authors. Sabrosky and Arnaud (1965) list six different synonyms of *Periscepsia*. The confusion with regard to *P. helymus* and *P. laevigata* lies in the fact that the former has been placed in seven different name combinations and the latter in eight. In addition, many authors (excluding Walker) confused *P. laevigata* with *P. helymus* and named it as the latter. The major generic names in which both species have been placed and which have been used in the literature are *Phorichaeta*, *Metachaeta*, and *Wagneria*. *P. helymus* has

had the specific names *helymus*, *helyma*, and *sequax*, while *P. laevigata* has had *laevigata*, *helymus*, *atra*, and *carbonaria*. The character recognized by Reinhard (1955) and Wood (pers. comm.) to separate these species is the presence of setae on the median portion of the first wing vein in *P. laevigata* as opposed to a bare first wing vein in *P. helymus*.

Because of the confusion which has existed about these two species, one must regard the host lists from the literature with caution.

3.1.4.1 *Periscepsia helymus* (Walker). The puparia of *P. helymus* were described by Greene (1921) under two synonymous names, *Phorichaeta sequax* (Williston), and *Metachaeta helymus*, but the puparia were different from each other.

Description of puparia. Greene's descriptions and figures of the puparia under the name *Metachaeta helymus* closely resemble *P. helymus*, while those of *Phorichaeta sequax* differ sufficiently from the other two to be considered different. Also, the puparia which I measured were significantly larger (4.5 x 2.1 mm.) than the dimensions given by Greene for *Phorichaeta sequax* (3.5 x 1.5 mm). Even the ranges of the specimens I studied (4.08 mm. - 4.88 mm. x 1.92 mm. - 2.16 mm) did not include his dimensions. *M. helymus* dimensions were 4.75 mm. x 1.75 mm. and hence are similar to the measurements taken from my study series.

From a lateral view the posterior regions of the puparium carrying the stigmatal plates and anus appear extended (fig. 24). From a posterior view the puparia appear nearly circular with a raised central region (fig. 25). The spiracular plates are terminal in position.

The spiracular plates of the posterior spiracles (fig. 26) are narrowly separated, only slightly raised and are quite flat. The cicatrix is large, round, and slightly concave in the central region. The entire shape of the spiracular plate varies from oblong to slightly curved.

The anterior spiracles are especially poor characters in this group because they are often lost at emergence. The stigmata are small and tuberculate with a cluster of pori in a crescent (fig. 28). The number of pori does not appear to be constant.

Description of larvae. No specimens of the final instar larvae were available for study, therefore I am relying on the cephalopharyngeal structures recovered from the puparia for characters.

The cephalopharyngeal structure (fig. 23) is very distinctive but the variations which occur tend to confuse its appearance. The anterior sclerite is heavily sclerotized with the ventral process being almost as long as the actual mouth hooks. Behind the ventral process lies an auxiliary sclerite which may be concealed or lie in several different positions in the same general region. The median and posterior sclerites are fused but with adequate lighting, the suture can be seen. Projecting dorsally from the median sclerite is a hook-like process which curves anteriorly. The posterior sclerite varies considerably in the degree of sclerotization from a dark colour which nearly obscures the hook, to a very weakly sclerotized, clear structure. In the latter case, many structural differences seem apparent but likely are insignificant. In this species the anterior process of the posterior sclerite is very weakly or not at all formed. In some specimens a membranous connection may be seen between the anterior and posterior sclerites in the dorsal regions.

Biology. Little is known of the biology of this species except that it attacks cutworm larvae and that more than one may emerge from a single host (Reinhard, 1955). Guppy (1967) records three or four

P. helymus as being reared from a single sixth instar *P. unipuncta* larva.

Hosts. In the literature, *P. helymus* has been recorded as being reared from the following hosts: *Heliophila comoides* (Tothill, 1913), Ontario; *Pseudaletia unipuncta* (Baker, 1914), Ontario; *Euxoa ochrogaster* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan. Reinhard (1955) lists the following hosts not recorded above: black army cutworm, *Actebia fennica*, Michigan; *Peridroma saucia*, California; *Cirphus* sp., Washington; *Euxoa auxiliaris*, Alberta; *Polia adjuncta*; *Grapholitha* sp. *Conistra devia*; *Lithophane innominata*, Maine. Specimens which I examined were reared from: *Leucania commoides*, Ontario; *A. eliminata*, New Brunswick; *Rhynchagrotis cupida*, New Brunswick; *Andropolia vancouvera*, British Columbia; *Andropolia* sp., Alberta; *A. contacta*, Alberta.

3.1.4.2 *Periscepsia laevigata* (Van der Wulp). There appears to be no previous description of the immature stages of this species in the literature.

Description of puparia. Only the puparium of one specimen was studied and it lacked the anterior flaps so that neither the cephalopharyngeal structures nor the anterior spiracles were available for study. The posterior spiracles are similar to those of *P. helymus* but the orificial ridges tend to be higher, wider, and more rounded (fig. 27). The orificia follow the top of the ridges almost to the level of the spiracular plates. While the cicatrix is large and round it is not as distinct as that of *P. helymus*. The best differentiating character is the median orificium which is very curved in *P. laevigata*

but nearly straight in *P. helymus*. The rounded shape of the orificial ridge of *P. laevigata* contrasts well with the long, narrow shape in *P. helymus*.

Biology. Little is known of the biology of this species except that it attacks fifth instar cutworm larvae (Guppy, 1967). The range of the species is from Guatemala to Canada (Reinhard, 1955).

Hosts. The problem of host records is important in regards to this species. As one cannot be sure of the accuracy of earlier identifications, it is possible that the following list is either incomplete or inaccurate. Reinhard (1955) lists the following hosts: *Pseudaletia unipuncta*, *Euxoa auxiliaris*, *Grapholitha* sp.; *Lascoria ambigualis*, *Elaphria mucicolora*, and unidentified cutworms. Guppy (1967) records *P. unipuncta* from Ontario as a host. The specimen I examined was reared from an unidentified 'Phalaenid' from Big Beaver, British Columbia.

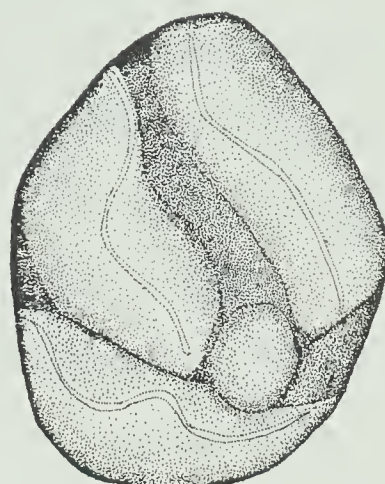
Fig. 18-22. *Bonnetia comta*. 18. cephalopharyngeal structures.
19. posterior spiracle. 20. anterior spiracle. 21. posterior view
of puparium. 22. puparium.

Fig. 23-26, 28. *Periscepsia helymus*. 23. cephalopharyngeal structures.
24. puparium. 25. posterior view of puparium. 26. posterior spiracle.
28. anterior spiracle. 27. posterior spiracle of *P. laevigata*.

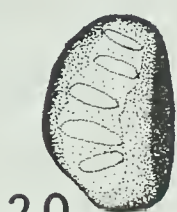
Scale in millimeters



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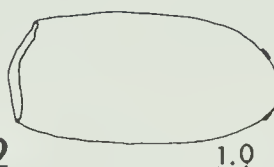
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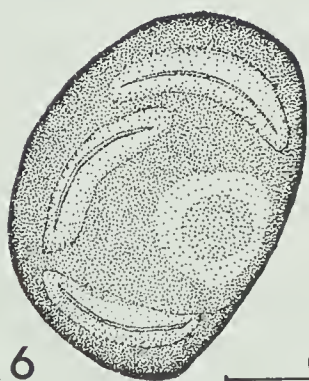
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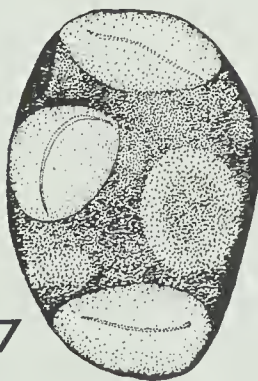
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3.2 Bombyliidae

3.2.1 Biology and morphology of immature bombyliids

Five species in two genera of Bombyliidae have been recorded as primary parasitoids, and one other species as a hyperparasitoid of *Euxoa ochrogaster*. Brooks (1952) illustrated the final instar larvae and the pupae of five of these six species and provided keys for their identification. Painter and Hall (1960) provide keys for adults to the genera of Bombyliidae, to the subgenera of *Villa*, and to the known species of *Poecilanthrax*.

Generally, little is known of the biology of bombyliids. No comprehensive work has been done on the biology of any species attacking Lepidoptera.

The terminology used for the morphology of the immature stages is based on Berg (1940) in his work on the immature stages of *Systoechus vulgaris* Loew.

While Bohart et al. (1960) suggest that there may be four larval instars, other authors have only described three (Hynes, 1947; Berg, 1940; Clausen, 1928). The first instar larva is active, vermiform, and adapted to move through the soil and seek out its host (Clausen, 1928; Bohart et al., 1960; Berg, 1940). In parasitoid species the first instar larvae penetrate their host and develop internally.

The second instar larva is far less mobile than the first and is more maggot-like (Clausen, 1940; Bohart et al., 1960). It has lost its adaptations for moving through the soil and likely can only move in open areas. In species which are internal parasitoids, the larva likely molts immediately after attacking the host due to the radically different environment in which it then lives.

Because the cast skin of the final instar larva can be found in the pupal case of the host, descriptions of this stage are available for several species of noctuid attacking parasitoids. Brooks (1952) reviews the taxonomically important characters of both the final instar larvae and the pupae of noctuid-attacking bombyliids. In the final instar larvae he found the structure of the mouth parts and the head sclerites to be important. In the pupae he found that the head tubercles and mouth part sizes were of specific use, whereas the apical segments were of little use due to the general uniformity in the group and the variability within the species involved.

Bombyliids have been observed apparently ovipositing in loose sand or dust, but this never has been confirmed (Painter and Hall, 1960). Brooks (1952) noted that the species attacking noctuids fly from the latter half of July through to September, but the hosts are not attacked until their fourth, fifth or sixth instars the next season. He felt that the species overwinters as eggs in the soil or old vegetation. Painter and Hall feel that the first instar larvae seek out small caterpillars as hosts and remain inactive until the host pupates, when they rapidly develop and kill the host. The bombyliid pupa breaks out of the host pupal remains, and with the use of directed spines and bristles moves to the soil surface where the adult emerges quickly (Painter and Hall, 1960; Allen, 1921; Snow, 1925). It is likely that the abrasion from moving through the soil accounts for much of the intraspecific differences which have been observed in the shape of the head tubercles, apical segments, and spines.

Other than Allen's (1921) report that *Poecilanthrax lucifer* (Fabr.)

attacked twenty-five percent of the fall armyworm, *Spodoptera frugiperda* (Smith), in Mississippi, bombyliids have been regarded as being minor parasitoids of noctuids (Brooks, 1952; King and Atkinson, 1928).

3.2.2 Villa Lioy This genus has a wide host range as internal or external parasites of Diptera, Lepidoptera, Hymenoptera, and Coleoptera. Painter and Hall provide a key to the adult sub-genera. Two of these, *Villa* and *Hemipenthes*, are of interest to us.

3.2.2.1 *Villa (Villa) alternata* (Say) This species was recorded by Brooks (1952) as a parasite of *E. ochrogaster* which was collected as fourth, fifth, and sixth instar larvae in May and June. Distribution records show this species to range across the prairies of Canada. Brooks provides illustrations of the mouth hooks, head capsule, and apical platelets of the mature larvae as well as of the entire pupa, its head, and apical structures.

Hosts. *Euxoa flavicollis*, *E. tessellata*, *Agrotis orthogonia*, *Feltia ducens*, *E. ochrogaster*, (Brooks, 1952); tenebrionid larvae (Clausen, 1940).

3.2.2.2 *Villa (Villa) fulviana* (Say) This species was recorded by King and Atkinson (1928) as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*, but only from *Euxoa* sp. by Brooks (1952). It has been collected in host pupae from June 30 to July 12 and found to emerge as adults in the autumn. King and Atkinson (1928) felt that it overwinters in alternative hosts. Illustrations of the larvae and pupae are provided by Brooks.

Hosts. *E. ochrogaster* (King and Atkinson, 1928), *Euxoa* sp. (Brooks, 1952).

3.2.2.3 *Villa (Villa) lateralis* (Say) King and Atkinson record this species as having attacked two specimens of *E. ochrogaster* and emerging

in the autumn. No reference is made to this species by Brooks (1952). No drawings of any of the life stages are known and no material appears to be available at the present time.

3.2.2.4 *Villa (Hemipenthes) moroides* (Say) Species of the subgenus *Hemipenthes* are hyperparasitic upon the primary parasites of Lepidoptera (Clausen, 1940). Clausen refers to members of this subgenus as attacking ichneumonid parasitoids, but Brooks (1952) records three species as being reared from tachinid hosts. *V. moroides* was reared from *Gonia* spp. and *Bonnetia comta*, which were reared from noctuid hosts. Clausen stated that the exact relationship between the host, parasitoid, and hyperparasitoid was not established and that it was possible that the ichneumonids were attacked in the pupal stage independently of the host. It appears that a true hyperparasitoid role has been established for *V. moroides*.

3.2.3 *Poecilanthrax* Osten Sacken This is a widespread genus which attacks noctuid larvae chiefly. Painter and Hall (1960) list fifteen species of cutworms and armyworms which are attacked by eight species of *Poecilanthrax*.

3.3.3.1 *Poecilanthrax alcyon* (Say) This species was recorded as a parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* by King and Atkinson (1928) under the name of *halcyon*. Painter and Hall give the distribution of the species in southern Canada and the United States, but fail to show the correct boundaries of northern distribution. The range extends from Texas to the North West Territories, and with the exception of Southern California, east of the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean.

Brooks (1952) illustrated the final instar larva (fig. 32) and pupa. Painter and Hall discuss the entire species at length, as *P. alcyon* is

the type of the genus, and give a detailed description of the adult. Figures 29, 30, 31 and 33 are original drawings of a specimen of *P. alcyon* reared from *E. ochrogaster*.

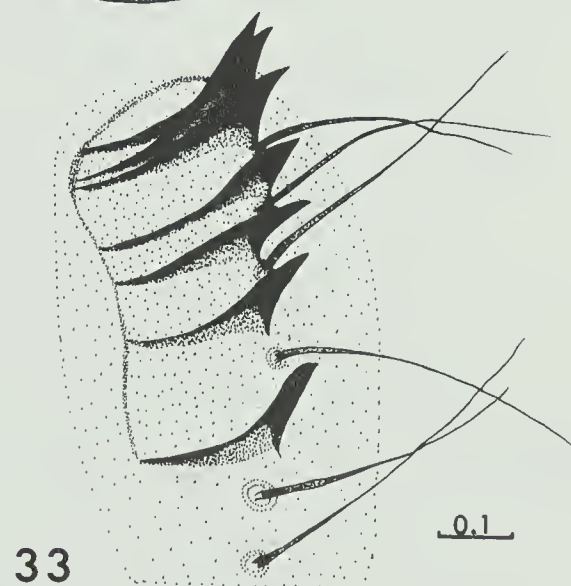
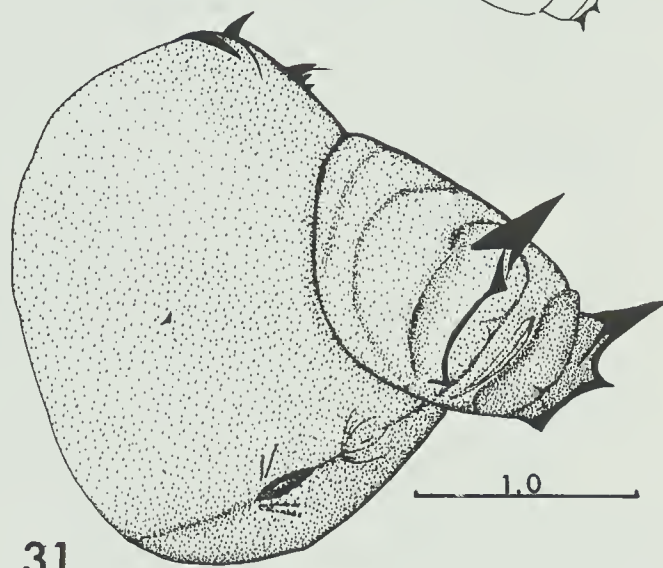
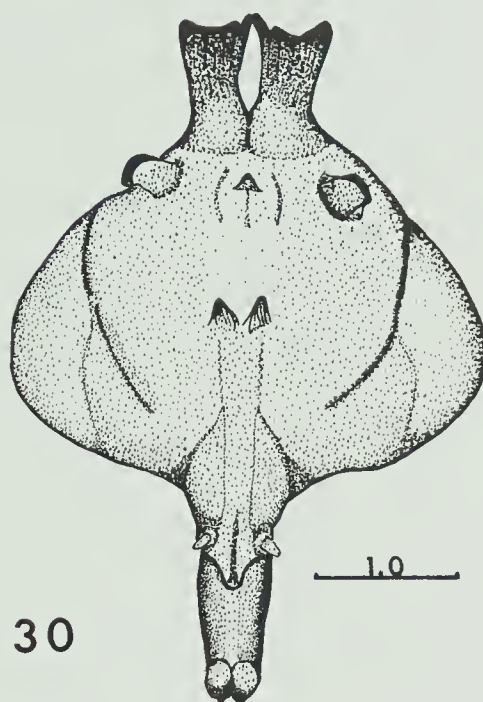
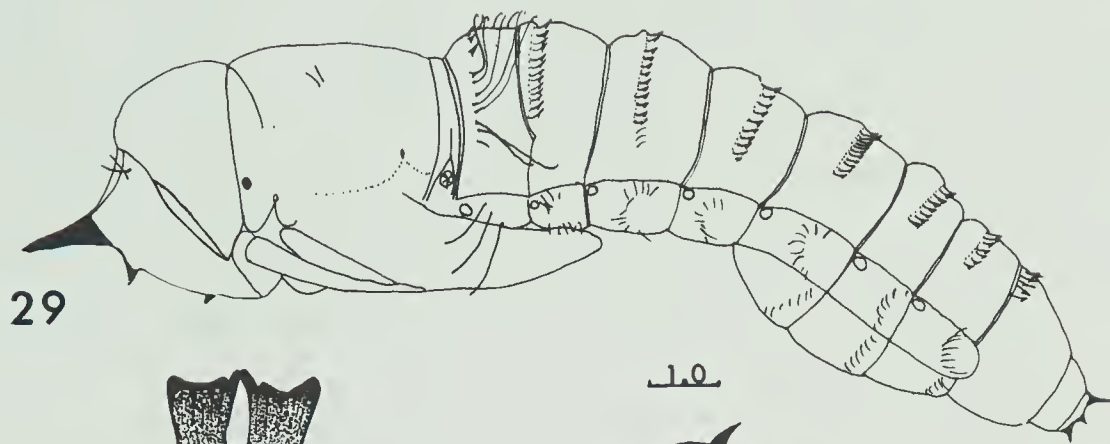
Hosts. *E. ochrogaster*, *E. flavicollis*, *Chorizagrotis thanatologia*, *Pseudaletia unipuncta*, (Brooks, 1952); *Peridroma margaritosa* (Walkden, 1950).

3.3.3.2 *Poecilanthrax willistonii* (Coquillett) The adults of this species were reported by King and Atkinson (1928) to emerge either in the autumn or the following June. They felt that the species overwinters as larvae in noctuid hosts which overwinter in the larval stage. Painter and Hall show the distribution as being from south of the United States to the middle of the prairie provinces of Canada, and from the west coast through to the central great plains. Figures of the larvae and pupae are given by Brooks and those of the pupae are reprinted by Painter and Hall.

Hosts. *Agroperina dubitans*, *Chorizagrotis thanatologia*, *Crymoides devastator*, *Euxoa flavicollis*, *E. ochrogaster*, *E. tessellata*, *Feltia ducens*, (Brooks, 1952); *Chorizagrotis auxiliaris*, *Euxoa scandens*, (Walkden, 1950).

Figs. 29-33. *Poecilanthrax alcyon*. 29. pupa. 30. ventral view of pupal head. 31. ventro-lateral view of posterior end of pupa. 32. final instar larva (Brooks, 1952). 33. spine and setal pattern of third abdominal segment of pupa.

Scale in millimeters.



3.3 Ichneumonidae

3.3.1 Morphology of immature ichneumonids. The ichneumonid parasitoids have many taxonomic characters which are useful to separate their immature stages. The terminology and approach to description follows that of Finlayson (1960). The cocoons, if present, can be separated using: size, color and shape, and location of the adult emergence hole from the cocoon. The spiracles were of limited use when studying these species as the differences I found were insignificant. The best separating characters for the final-instar larvae were found in the cephalic structures (fig. 34). To differentiate between species, the presence or absence of sclerites, and the shape of mandibles were the best characters found.

Preparation of specimens. After having been soaked in water for at least 24 hours, the final-instar larval skins were removed from the cocoons by means of fine forceps or a hooked pin. The larval skin was gently unfolded and removed from the adult meconium which covered many of the specimens. The skin was then placed in 10% KOH for 24 hours at room temperature, or longer if it was not cleared enough. Boiling in KOH was found to disarticulate the cephalic structures resulting in the loss of sclerites, and so was not used. The cleared larval skin was mounted in polyvinyl lactophenol on microscope slides for further examination. Polyvinyl lactophenol was chosen because it is a mild clearing agent and thus aids in the ease of sclerite recognition.

3.3.2 Ichneumonini. Four species of the tribe Ichneumonini have been recorded as parasitoids of *E. ochrogaster*. Three species,

Eutanyacra suturalis, *Diphyus* #1, and *Spilichneumon superbus* were examined and found to be similar in the following ways. The females lay their eggs in the cutworm larvae but the host is not killed until it reaches the pupal stage. None spin any apparent cocoon and all use the host pupa for protection during their pupal stage. All have greatly reduced larval mouth parts which differ between species mainly in the mandible shape. One pair of sclerites located behind the mandibles do not conveniently fit into the Finlayson (1960) sclerite classification. It is possible that these are modified from the suspensorial sclerite. In all these species, the stipital and labial sclerites are lost. The shape of the spiracles is quite constant (fig. 37), and is of no use to separate species. Several ichneumonine larvae were dissected from final-instar cutworm larvae and one was removed from a host pupa. Those removed from the cutworms were an early instar (fig. 36) and could be either *Diphyus* #1 or *S. superbus*. The one removed from the pupa had cephalic structures which were clearly those of *Diphyus* #1. When attacked by any of these species, the host pupa does not darken as it normally does, but remains the shiny brown of a healthy three to seven day old pupa. The anterior portion of the host pupa is chewed and broken by the emerging ichneumonine adult (fig. 64). The pupal remains are distinct from those from which a moth has emerged (fig. 61). The unexamined species, *Pseudamblyteles subfuscus*, is likely similar to the examined species.

3.3.3 *Eutanyacra suturalis* (Say)

Description of larvae. The cephalic structures (fig. 35) of the final-instar larva with incomplete epistoma. Pleurostoma wide,

heavily sclerotized, and with a very irregular, poorly defined edge. Superior mandibular process wide and short, inferior mandibular process reduced to one. Pleurostoma and hypostoma closely connected but limited movement between them possible. Hypostomal arms heavy and of irregular width. Stipital and labial sclerites missing. Labial and maxillary palpi small and difficult to see. Silk press small and very lightly sclerotized. Mandibles large, robust, heavily sclerotized with slightly curved blades which continued into base without clear marking. Behind or above mandibles, the two sclerites heavily sclerotized and irregularly larger dorsally than ventrally.

Biology. *E. suturalis* females were observed, collected, and reared during the *Actebia fennica* outbreak at Worsley, Alberta in 1967. The females were seen to fly and hunt during the late afternoon and early evening. They were found hunting in fields which had been defoliated several days before by the passing cutworm army. The hunting females ran rapidly on the soil surface and searched around soil clods and in large cracks in the soil. While hunting, they could be easily approached and could be captured by hand. Captured females would attack field-caught *A. fennica* larvae, but oviposition was never observed. The attack consisted of mounting the cutworm lengthwise and curling the tip of the abdomen under so that the ovipositor touched the cutworm. At this point, every attacking female was flipped off the cutworm by a violent twisting movement of the cutworm. In no instance was such a cutworm re-attacked, and I never succeeded in rearing an *E. suturalis* adult

from an offered cutworm. In the laboratory, adult *E. suturalis* emerged 10 to 14 days after host pupation.

Hosts. Whitehouse (1922) recorded *E. suturalis* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* in Alberta. The following hosts were found by examining host labels in the C.N.C.: *Actebia fennica*, British Columbia; *E. ochrogaster*, Saskatchewan; *E. flavicollis*, Sask.; *Scotogramma trifolii*, Sask.

3.3.4 *Spilichneumon superbus* (Provancher)

Description of larvae. The cephalic structures of the final-instar larvae are similar to those of *E. suturalis* and *Diphyus* #1. The size is closer to that of *Diphyus* #1 than to that of *E. suturalis*. The mandibles are short and broad with a wide, straight blade which is continuous in appearance with the base. The edge of the pleurostoma is well defined as in *Diphyus* #1.

Biology. This species was reared from *A. fennica*, *E. ochrogaster* and *F. ducens* during the current study. Because it was not recognized as being different from *Diphyus* #1 while live adults were available, the adults were mixed and little data on either behavior or biology was obtained. The adults emerged from the host about three weeks after host pupation.

Hosts. The following hosts of *S. superbus* have been found or recorded: *Chorizagrotis auxiliaris* (Heinrich, 1960), Alberta; *E. ochrogaster* (C.N.C.), Man.; *E. scandens* (Heinrich, 1960, C.N.C.), Sask.; *E. flavicollis* (Heinrich, 1960), Sask.; *E. messoria* (Heinrich, 1960), Sask.; *Feltia ducens* (Heinrich, 1960, C.N.C.), Sask.; *Pseudaletia unipuncta* (Heinrich, 1960), Hawaii (introduced).

3.3.5 *Pseudamblyteles subfuscus* (Cresson). Strickland (1923) recorded *Amblyteles subfuscus* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. This species was subsequently transferred to *Pseudamblyteles* which is now considered to be congeneric with *Diphyus* Kriechbaumer (Heinrich, 1961). The genus *Diphyus* is now being reworked and the different species are currently denoted by numbers in the C.N.C. In the C.N.C. only *Diphyus* #1 of the genus *Diphyus* had host labels associating it with *E. ochrogaster*. Dr. Mason (pers. comm.) states that *Diphyus* #1 does not include what was *P. subfuscus*. There is no other evidence currently available to determine which of the *Diphyus* species was *P. subfuscus*.

Strickland described the biology of *P. subfuscus* from his research. Unfortunately, little of the data which he presents is of use to separate *P. subfuscus* from any of the other ichneumonines which attack *E. ochrogaster*. The drawings and descriptions which he gives are also too generalized to be of use. The major biological fact which he describes is that the eggs are laid in the salivary glands of the host cutworm. During my dissections of *E. ochrogaster* larvae, I have seen neither the eggs which he describes nor the resulting scar on the salivary glands. Until the taxonomy of *Diphyus* is better understood, the status of *P. subfuscus* as a parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* will be unclear.

Hosts. Strickland reared *P. subfuscus* from *Chorizagrotis auxiliaris* and *E. ochrogaster* in Alberta, while Gibson (1916) reared it from *Euxoa excellans* in British Columbia.

3.3.6 *Diphyus* #1.

Description of larva. The cephalic structures of the final-instar larvae (fig. 38) of *Diphyus* #1 are similar to those of *E. suturalis*. The mandibles differ from those of *E. suturalis* in that they have a long narrow blade which is well marked off from the base. When rotated the blades appear to be curved posteriorly. The sclerites above the mandibles tend to be more squared than those of *E. suturalis*. The edge of the epistoma in *Diphyus* #1 is well defined.

Biology. Using the final-instar cephalic structures, it was found that this species was a parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* at Calahoo. Adults emerged from the host pupae about three weeks after host pupation.

Hosts. The following hosts were found by examining *Diphyus* #1 specimens in the C.N.C.: *E. ochrogaster*, Alberta; *C. auxiliaris*, Alberta unidentified cutworm, British Columbia.

3.3.7 *Camponotus atkinsoni* (Viereck). King and Atkinson (1928) reported *C. atkinsoni* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. This species appears to be one of the more important parasitoids of *E. ochrogaster*. This will be discussed later.

Description of cocoon. The cocoon (fig. 40) (2.1 - 2.4 x 5.4-6.2 mm.) consists of two layers: a very thin outer layer of silk which is also used to secure the cocoon to the substrate, and a tough inner parchment-like layer. The freshly spun cocoon is a light yellowish-white but the mature cocoon varies from a dark tan to a dull brown. Some of the specimens reared in this study were observed to spin their cocoons with the host remains attached to the posterior end. In other cases, the larva would crawl a few centimeters before spinning a cocoon. In all cases the cocoon took twelve to eighteen hours to complete. The exit hole is on the dorsal

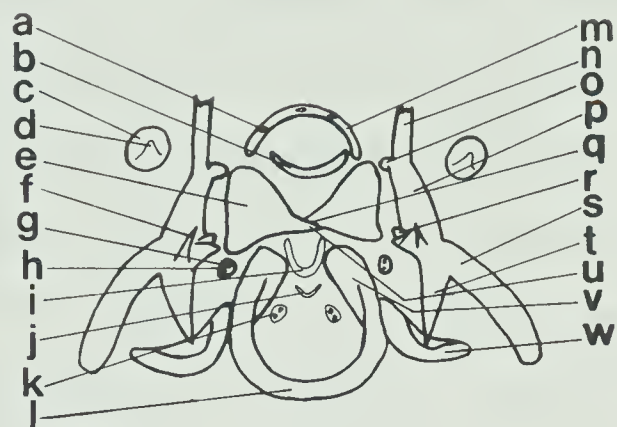
Fig. 34. Generalized cephalic structures of final instar ichneumonoid larva (from Finlayson, 1960).

Fig. 35. Cephalic structures of final instar larva of *Eutanyacra suturalis*. Fig. 36. ichneumonine larva. 37. larval spiracle of *Spilichneumon superbus*. 38. cephalic structures of final instar larva of *Diphyus* #1. 39. cephalic structures of final instar larva of *S. superbus*.

a, vacuole; b, suspensorial sclerite; c, antennal socket;
d, antenna; e. mandible; f. lacinial sclerite; g. sensorium;
h, maxillary palp; i. silk press; j. prelabial sclerite; k, labial palp;
l, labial sclerite; m. labral sclerite; n, epistoma (incomplete); o,
superior mandibular process; p, pleurostoma; q, teeth; r, inferior
mandibular process; s, hypostoma; t, hypostomal spur; u, blade of
mandible; v, dorsal arm of labial sclerite; w, stipital sclerite

Scale in millimeters.

34



35

0.1



36

1.0

37



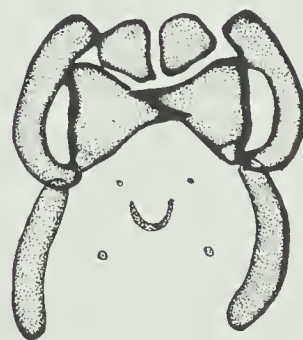
0.1



38

0.1

39



edge of the anterior end of the cocoon. It is irregular in outline as the adult chews its way out. The remains of the final-instar larva are struck to one side near the end of the cocoon. These remains are often difficult to find and remove. The remains of the pupa and the meconium tend to obscure the larval remains so that care must be taken not to lose the cephalic structures in any of the study procedures.

Description of larva. The cephalic structures of the final-instar larva (fig. 42) with a complete epistomal arch which is very lightly sclerotized and difficult to recognize. Superior mandibular processes sclerotized and small. Inferior mandibular processes well developed. Lacinial sclerite absent. Hypostoma long, narrow, straight, and heavily sclerotized. Hypostomal spur about one and one-half times as long as wide at base and meets straight, well-developed stipital sclerite at about midpoint. Stipital sclerite meets top of labial sclerite. Labial sclerite widest at at one-third of way from base and narrowed to a rounded point at end. End of labial sclerite very lightly sclerotized and may appear lost. Silk press large, wide, well developed and terminated by a long narrow spur. Mandibles small with a short blade which curves directly from base. Labral sclerite absent. Suspensorial sclerite short and narrow. Maxillary palpi large and well developed and protrude in a large membranous sack. Antennae large and well developed.

Biology. *C. atkinsoni* is the only recorded parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* which attacks the early instar larvae. It usually kills the host in the third or fourth instar. For this reason, this species is

usually overlooked or not found in studies based solely on outbreak conditions. The first evidence of the presence of a *C. atkinsoni* larva in a host appears two to four days before the host is killed. At this point, the host is noticeably more sluggish, eats less than normal, and tends to bulge abnormally. Subsequently, the host stops eating, loses its mobility, and begins to lose its normal shape. Just before the parasitoid emerges, it can be seen moving about in the host, as the host's integument is very limp. The *C. atkinsoni* larva devours the entire contents of the host so that after it rips its way out of the host, the remains lie very flat and are nearly transparent. The parasitoid larva begins to spin its cocoon immediately after emergence and usually needs some object to crawl against so that it can complete its cocoon. The cocoon is stuck to the substrate with silk fibers. The adult *C. atkinsoni* emerge seven to ten days after the completion of the cocoon. All the specimens studied in 1968 emerged from the host during the last few days of May and the first week of June, and the adults emerged during the first three weeks of June. Although all available cutworm species found in the test area were reared in both 1967 and 1968, no alternative host was found later in the season.

Hosts. *E. ochrogaster* appears to be the only recorded host of *C. atkinsoni*. Graham (1965) lists several noctuid hosts of *Camponotus* spp. and one yponomeutid, the diamond-back moth, *Plutella maculipennis*. As *C. atkinsoni* attacks only the early instars of its cutworm hosts, its host range will likely only be found in studies which are based upon endemic cutworm populations rather than epidemic populations.

3.3.8 *Netelia* Gray. The genus *Netelia* formerly was named *Paniscus* Schrank. The name change was necessitated because of the misapplication of the name *Paniscus* by Gravenhorst (Townes, 1969). Townes (1969) provides taxonomic information on the adults of this genus and gives keys and characters to separate specimens to the sub-generic level. Using his characters, it was found that the specimens reared from *E. ochrogaster* were in the sub-genus *Netelia*.

Description of cocoon. The cocoons of three borrowed specimens of *Netelia* sp. were examined but none contained any larval remains. One cocoon found in the field study at Calahoo closely resembled those of *Netelia*, and it also lacked any larval remains. It is possible that the larval exuviae were removed from the borrowed specimens by a previous worker. It is also possible that the remains are left loose in the cocoon and easily lost. While the literature contains generalized descriptions of *Netelia* larvae, no mouth part drawings appear to be available. Cushman (1926) and Strickland (1923) provide illustrations of larvae and eggs of various members of the genus.

The cocoons studied averaged 4 x 12 mm. in size. The cocoon (fig. 41) consists of a very sparse outer covering of silk which appears as a fluffy mass at the ends, and a tough, tightly constructed inner layer. The over-all color is shiny black, but Strickland noted that it is originally a light color which changes with maturity. When viewed laterally, the cocoons had a slightly curved shape. The adults emerged from the end of the cocoon leaving a very ragged and irregular exit hole.

Biology. *Netelia* sp. is the only recorded external parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster*. Cushman (1926), Vance (1927), and Strickland (1923)

provided information on the biology of species in this genus. Only a generalized summary of the life history of *Netelia* spp. is given here.

The females deposit one to four stalked eggs on the thoracic region of late instar lepidopterous larvae. Of these only one survives to maturity. Strickland showed that the egg would remain attached even though the host molted. Cushman (1926) stated that the host larvae were attacked when they were very large and when they were about to pupate in some protective medium. The egg hatches generally after the host has entered a pupation site. The parasitoid larva feeds by puncturing the host integument, attaching its mouthparts, and remaining in one place until new punctures are made necessary. The parasitoid larva remains attached to the egg for most of its life, at least till the final instar. Attachment to the egg shell is accomplished by a special spined area on the terminal abdominal segment. The cast larval skins all remain attached to the egg shell and provide a convenient record of the larval morphology of each instar. The parasitoid develops rapidly and kills the host leaving a dry skin. Shortly after this it spins a cocoon.

As the species which has been reared from cutworms has not been identified, it is not possible to construct a host list. The genus is too large and widespread to be considered in this paper. Townes (1969) states that the hosts of *Netelia* are exposed, medium-sized lepidopterous larvae that pupate in the ground. As *Netelia* spp. attack the larvae just before they are to pupate, it is likely that any species is a potential host if it crawls on the soil looking for a pupation site. The examined specimens reared from *E. ochrogaster* were from Saskatoon and Red Deer, Saskatchewan. One empty cocoon which likely was of *Netelia* was found at Calahoo.

3.3.9 *Gravenhorstia propinqua* (Cresson). Originally, King and Atkinson (1928) recorded *Erigorgus* sp. as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. *Erigorgus* is now considered to be a synonym of *Gravenhorstia* (Townes, 1961). Specimens of *Gravenhorstia propinqua* which were reared from *E. ochrogaster* were found in the Canadian National Collection.

Description of cocoon. The cocoon of this species is spun inside the host pupa. It appears to be lightly constructed of a single layer of silk which likely offers little protection to the parasitoid pupa. The emerging adult destroys the entire anterior end of the host pupa and leaves much of the cocoon visible (fig. 65). The larval remains are stuck in the posterior end of the cocoon and are easily recovered and handled.

Description of larva. The cephalic structures of the last larval instar (fig. 43) are distinct from the other pupal parasitoids and are described as follows:

The epistoma is heavy and complete, with superior mandibular processes short, wide and directed ventrally. Inferior mandibular processes are reduced to one which is broad and heavy. Lacinial sclerite is absent. Long, heavy hypostomal arms are curved ventrally in a wide semi-circle so that the ends form a nearly straight line with ends of the labial sclerite. Hypostomal spur absent. Stipital sclerite long, narrow, extending from one-third of way along the hypostoma ventro-medially to a point three-quarters along its length, where it bends sharply dorso-medially to touch the labial sclerite. Labial sclerite incomplete with long narrow arms extending ventrally. Silk press present, very lightly

sclerotized forming a wide U-shape. Labral sclerite straight, short and irregular in outline with several vacuoles. Suspensorial sclerite very wide and well developed. Mandibles large, well developed, with distinct blade clearly marked off from base. Maxillary and labial palps clearly distinct. Antennae not observed.

Biology. Except that it kills the pupal stage of *E. ochrogaster*, little is known of the biology of *Gravenhorstia propinqua*. King and Atkinson noted that the species they recorded overwintered in the host pupa. One interesting fact appears in the host lists for the genus. Two tortricids have been recorded as hosts, and in both cases the *Gravenhorstia* sp. involved killed the larvae. In both cases where noctuid hosts were involved, the pupal stage was killed. It is possible that when this genus is studied more carefully, more than one genus will be found within the present concept.

Hosts. The following hosts have been recorded for *Gravenhorstia* spp.: *Polia purpurissata* (Wood et al., 1954), New Brunswick; *Archips argyrospilus* (Paradis, 1960), Quebec; *Tortrix alleniana* (Martin, 1958), Ontario; *Agrotis orthogonia* (King and Atkinson, 1928). The specimens reared from *E. ochrogaster* were from Saskatchewan.

3.4 Braconidae

3.4.1 Morphology of immature braconids. Basically, the methods used to separate the immature stages of ichneumonids (3.3.1) apply to those of braconids. In addition, important characters are found in the color, size, shape, and number of cocoons per host in each species. The appearance of the cocoon mass is also of importance.

3.4.2 Microgastrinae. Four species, *Microplitis kewleyi*, *Apanteles laeviceps*, *A. griffini*, and *A. acronyctae*, from the subfamily Microgastrinae have been recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. Short (1952) stated that the final instar larvae are characterized as follows: hypostoma, stipital sclerite and labial sclerite present; hypostomal spur reduced; pleurostoma weakly sclerotized; epistoma always absent; antennae not distinct; setae present on body but spines not present. Capek (1970) gives the same basic characters but makes no definite statement about the epistoma. I believe that Short is incorrect in stating that the epistoma is always missing, as it is present in *M. kewleyi*. Capek (1970) states that the group of genera which *Apanteles* and *Microplitis* belong to are endoparasites of lepidopterous larvae, are often gregarious, emerge as mature larvae to pupate, and that the emergence hole is regular due to a cap.

3.4.3.1 *Apanteles acronyctae* Riley. *Apanteles acronyctae* was recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* by King and Atkinson (1928). The record was based on only two specimens reared by the authors. *A. acronyctae* is normally associated only with arctiid hosts and likely does not attack cutworms (Mason, pers. comm.). This record is likely

based on a mistaken identification.

3.4.3.2 *Apanteles laeviceps* Ashmead. *Apanteles laeviceps* was recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* by Strickland (1923).

Description of cocoon. The cocoon mass (fig. 45) contains 22 to 28 individual cocoons. The mass is compact and only rarely was an isolated cocoon observed. The cocoons are tightly woven together and are united in a single irregular deep mass. The individual cocoon (fig. 46) is 3.0 to 3.2 mm. long, cylindrical with bluntly rounded ends, and is lightly constructed. When treated with a mild KOH solution the cocoon structure is completely destroyed. The loose outer layer of silk is tightly interwoven with that of the other cocoons. As with the other braconids, a distinct cap is formed and breaks off when the adult emerges. The color of the mass changes from a pale yellow to white as the cocoons mature. In many cocoons, the contents can be seen through their walls.

Description of larvae. The penultimate larval stage of *A. laeviceps* (fig. 47), which is found in the host, differs from the same stage of *Meteorus vulgaris* in the following ways. The cephalic region of *A. laeviceps* is more clearly defined than that of *M. vulgaris*. The body of *A. laeviceps* is long, narrow, and terminated by a bulbous caudal appendage. Overall length is approximately 5 mm., with the widest point measuring 1.8 mm. As in *M. vulgaris*, the larvae molt to the final instar as they escape from the host. The final instar larva was described by Strickland (1923). It differs from that of *M. vulgaris* in that it lacks a definite caudal appendage and has a series of small black spines on its body. It differs from the penultimate stage by not having the globular caudal appendage. In both of the last two larval instars of

A. laeviceps the mouthparts appear similar.

The cephalic structures of the final-instar larvae with epistoma missing. Pleurostoma apparently missing. Lower mandibular process blunt and rounded. Hypostoma heavily sclerotized, long, narrow and curved medially. Hypostomal spur small, distinct, pointed. Stipital sclerite heavily sclerotized, wide with a distinct twist in the mid-area. Labial sclerite complete, well-developed, thick at top, narrowed at bottom, sometimes widened at end. Silk press very obscure but large. Maxillary and labial palpi small. Mandibles with long curved blade arising low on mandibular base. Antennae and spiracles not apparent.

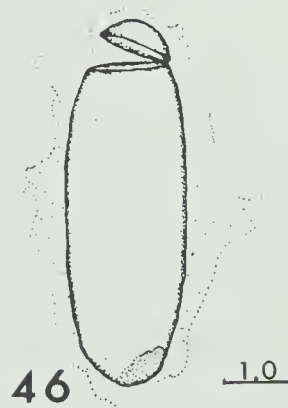
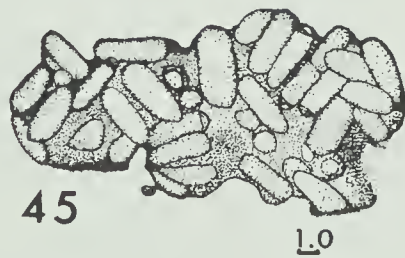
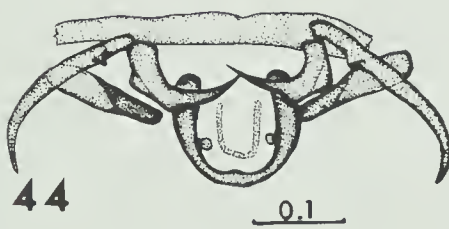
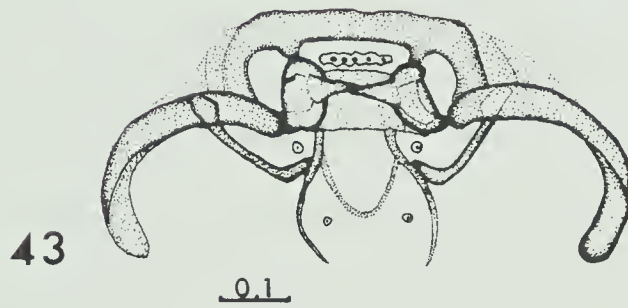
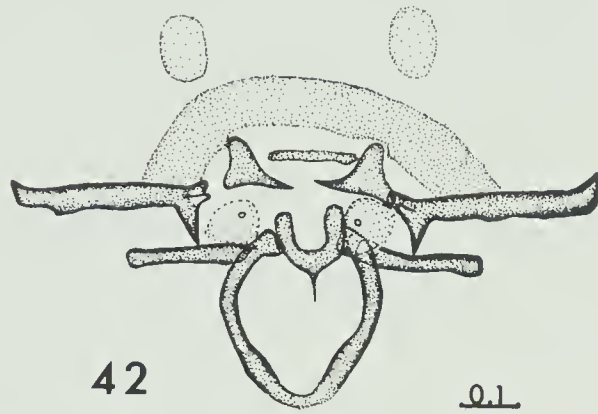
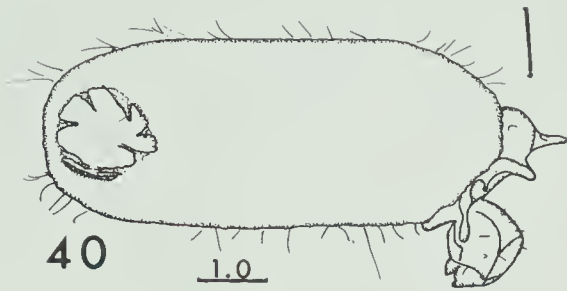
Biology. The females of *A. laeviceps* oviposit in early instar host larvae. This was demonstrated in the current study by rearing early instar cutworms which had been captured in the field, and finding them to be attacked by *A. laeviceps*. The earliest instar cutworm found attacked was an early third instar. The host is usually killed in the fifth or early sixth instar. The larvae of *A. laeviceps* exert a strong influence over the behaviour of the host. Strickland noted that until the *A. laeviceps* larvae began to attach to the host's cuticle, no ill effects were evident. At this stage, the host leaves the soil and climbs some convenient object such as a grain stem or a large clod of earth. I have observed *E. ochrogaster* larvae climbing only when attacked by *A. laeviceps*. While the host is on the object, the parasitoid larvae emerge from all sides of it. The host then crawls away leaving the parasitoids behind. The parasitoids begin to spin their cocoons almost immediately. When studying cutworm outbreaks, cocoon masses of *A. laeviceps* are easily found by examining marker

stakes or emergence traps, both of which serve as climbing points for the hosts. The host larva returns to the soil but always dies within a short time. In the laboratory, I have seen *E. ochrogaster* larvae live up to three days following *A. laeviceps* emergence. These host larvae are recognizable by the presence of the exuviae-plugged emergence holes of the parasitoid, the presence of one or more *A. laeviceps* larvae in the body cavity which failed to emerge, and by the general lack of damage to the muscles and nerves.

Hosts. The following hosts have been recorded in the literature: *Eucirrhoidea pampina* (Wood and Nielson, 1957), N.B.; *Spaelotis clandestina* (Wood, 1951), N.B.; *Syngrapha epigaea* (Wood, 1951), N.B.; *E. ochrogaster*, *Chorizagrotis auxiliaris* (Strickland, 1923), Alta.; *Meliana albilinea* (Webster, 1911); *Loxostege sticticalis* (Vierick, 1916), *Pseudaletia unipuncta* (Guppy, 1967) Ontario. During the current study *A. laeviceps* was reared from *E. ochrogaster* in 1967 and 1968 and from *Feltia ducens* in 1967.

3.4.3.3 *Apanteles griffini* Viereck. Schaffner and Griswold (1934) recorded *Apanteles griffini* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* in the north-eastern part of the United States.

Description of cocoon. The cocoon mass of *A. griffini* (fig. 49) is deeply divided longitudinally so that two distinct but connected portions are evident. The construction and density of the mass is very similar to that of *A. laeviceps*. The groove is likely formed because the larvae pupate almost immediately after emergence and do not move together. The groove corresponds to the location of the host at the time of emergence of the parasitoid larvae.



Description of larvae. No specimens of the entire larvae were available for study. Cephalic structures of final-instar larvae (fig. 48) similar to those of *A. laeviceps*. Hypostoma less distinctly curved than in *A. laeviceps*. The labial sclerite more narrowly developed than that of *A. laeviceps*. Mandible with a long narrow blade which arises near the center of the base. The base is more triangular than that of *A. laeviceps*. The hypostomal spur is short and bluntly developed.

Biology. *A. griffini* is generally found in the more southern range of *E. ochrogaster* (Mason, pers. comm.). Little is known of the biology of this species.

Hosts. Walkden (1950) recorded the following hosts of *A. griffini* from the central great plains, U.S.A.: *Agrotis orthogonia*, *A. gladiaria*, *Chorizagrotis auxiliaris*, *Peridroma margaritosa*.

3.4.4 *Microplitis kewleyi* Muesebeck. Schaffner and Griswold (1934) recorded *Microplitis kewleyi* as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. Only one specimen was available for study.

Description of cocoon. The cocoon (fig. 51) is solitary, small (3.1 x 1.4 mm.), has very little outer silk, has a very tough inner layer of silk, and is an opaque buff color.

Description of larvae. Cephalic structures (fig. 50) of the final instar larva with a very weakly sclerotized, incomplete epistoma. Superior mandibular process very indistinct, as well as the rest of pleurostoma. Inferior mandibular processes each small and bluntly developed. Hypostoma heavily sclerotized, curved medially, with a reduced, pointed hypostomal spur. Stipital sclerite long, narrow, and with irregular outline. Labial sclerite heavily sclerotized, widest at midpoint and narrowed to a point at distal

end. Silk press lightly sclerotized, long and narrow. Suspensorial sclerite lightly sclerotized and irregular in form.

Mandibles with short narrow blades arising from bottom of mandible bases. The mandible open posteriorly in a distinct groove.

Biology. Extremely little is known of the biology of this species other than that it attacks larval cutworms. The examined specimen was reared from a cutworm at College Park, Md.

3.4.5 *Meteorus* Haliday. Two species of *Meteorus*, *dimidiatus* Cresson and *vulgaris* Cresson have been recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*. Strickland (1923) recorded the former as being a common parasitoid of prairie cutworms. He noted, however, that difficulty had been encountered when the series were identified in distinguishing them from them from *M. vulgaris*, and Dr. W.R.M. Mason also is sceptical of this record. The current host lists (Graham, 1965) do not include *M. dimidiatus*. All of the *Meteorus* specimens reared from *E. ochrogaster* in my study were *M. vulgaris*. Strickland dealt at length on the biology, hosts, and development of *M. dimidiatus*. This information on the biology of *M. dimidiatus* appears now to be valid for *M. vulgaris*.

3.4.4.1 *Meteorus vulgaris* Cresson. This species was recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* by King (1924), and has subsequently been recorded several times.

Description of cocoon. The cocoons are 4.9 - 5.4 mm. x 1.9 - 2.3 mm., elliptical in shape with the widest point between the posterior one-third and the midpoint (fig. 55). The anterior end of the cocoon terminates in a distinct cap which breaks off at adult emergence. Specimens which were observed spinning their cocoons formed the cap only after

the rest of the cocoon was completed. While the rest of the cocoon turns brown with maturity, the cap remains a much lighter color. The cocoons are usually translucent so that the contents are easily seen. An outer layer of fine silk binds the cocoon to the substrate and to surrounding cocoons. The cocoon mass (fig. 54) is very loose and irregular, and it is common to find cocoons completely separated from the rest of the mass. The larval remains are easily found and removed from the cocoons.

Description of larvae. Cephalic structures of the final-instar (fig. 52) with incomplete, lightly sclerotized epistoma. Each superior mandibular process well developed, inferior mandibular processes small and blunt, lacinial sclerite small and pointed. Hypostomal arms short, narrow curved, and only lightly sclerotized. Pleurostoma distinctly sclerotized as opposed to light sclerotization of the epistoma and hypostoma. Stipital sclerite long, narrow, almost straight, reaching upper end of labial sclerite. Labial sclerite large, heavy and greatly thickened in ventral portion. Silk press well developed and moderately sclerotized. Well-developed pharyngeal region with lightly sclerotized ridges behind silk press and top of labial sclerite. Mandibles small, with short, pointed, conical blades well set off from base. Maxillary palps large and with well-developed membranous projection. Antennae large and well developed.

Strickland provided figures of the entire final instar larva and of the penultimate larva. The larva normally molts as it emerges from the host leaving the exuvia of penultimate larva in the emergence hole.

The penultimate larva as shown by Strickland has a long caudal appendage whereas the final-instar larva has a much reduced caudal appendage. No larvae similar to that described by Strickland as the penultimate instar were found during my study. The shape of the final-instar larva (fig. 53) changes as the cocoon is spun. The larva shortens and thickens, the segmentation becomes less defined, and the caudal appendage becomes more obscure. When dissecting host specimens from which *M. vulgaris* larvae had emerged, it was found that one to three larvae were usually remaining in the host. These appeared the same as the final-instar larvae and likely molted even though they failed to emerge.

Biology. The biology of the immature stages of *M. vulgaris* is well documented by Strickland (1923). Normally, 24 to 28 pupae were reared from a single host but as many as 36 were reached during my study. The hosts killed by *M. vulgaris* during 1967 and 1968 were in the late stages of the sixth instar. In most cases, the host larva crawled away from the *M. vulgaris* pupae and died. Dissection of the host cutworm after the emergence of the *M. vulgaris* larvae revealed that the muscle layers were partially destroyed, as is the case with other parasitoids. The exuviae of the penultimate instar larvae formed blackened areas on the cutworm integument indicating the emergence points. These usually occur on the ventro-lateral portion of the cutworm's body. The presence of the cast exuviae gives the cutworm a characteristic appearance, aiding in recognition of the cutworm after the *M. vulgaris* larvae have emerged, but before the death of the host. In two cases, *M. vulgaris* pupal masses were found in the loose upper soil. The adults emerge from the pupae 14 to 17

days after pupation.

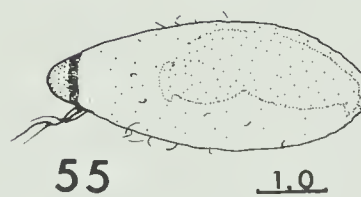
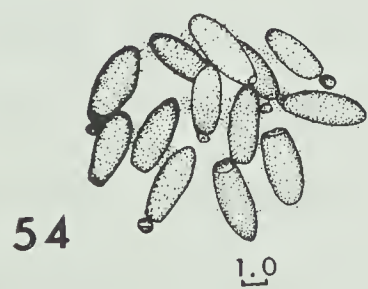
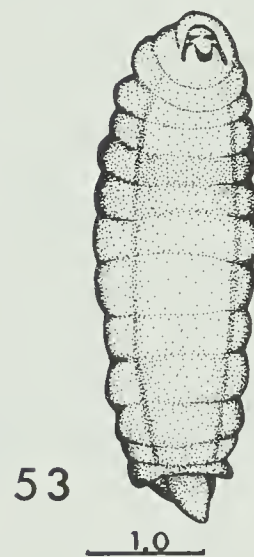
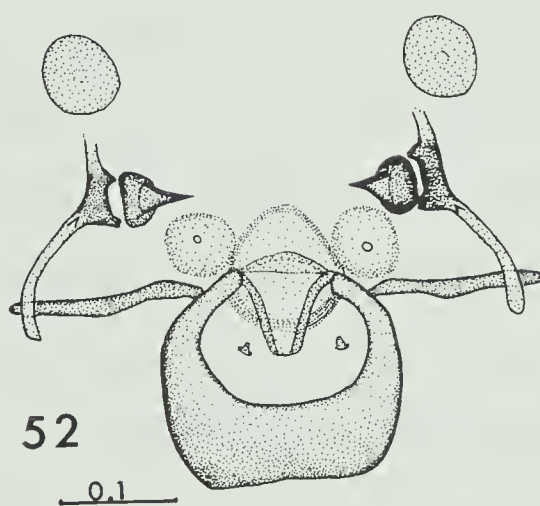
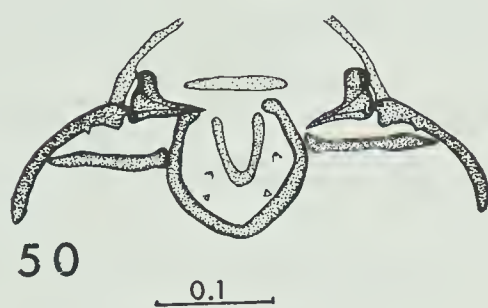
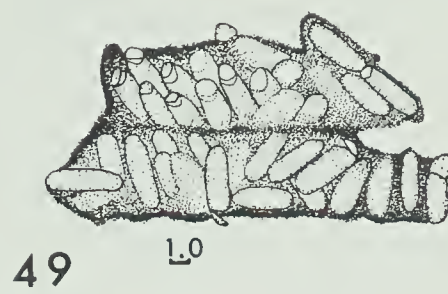
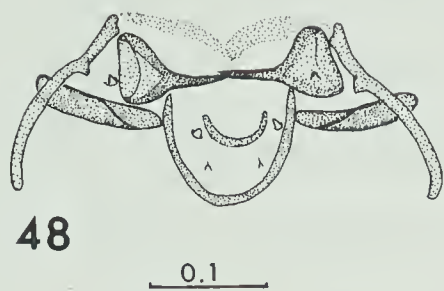
Hosts. The following hosts have been recorded for *M. vulgaris*:
Euxoa ochrogaster (King and Atkinson, 1928; King, 1924) Sask.; *E. tristicula* (King, 1924) Sask.; *Peridroma saucia* (Fletcher, 1900); *Syngrapha epigae* (Wood and Nielson, 1960) N.B.. Strickland (1923) reared *M. vulgaris* (or *dimidiatus*) from the following hosts captured in Alberta: *A. orthogonia*, *E. ochrogaster*, *C. auxiliaris*, *E. tristicula*, *S. devastator*, *Actebia fennica*. Walkden (1950) listed the following hosts of *M. vulgaris* from the central great plains, U.S.A.: *A. orthogonia*, *A. gladiaria*, *A. ypsilon*, *C. auxiliaris*, *Feltia subgothica*, *Euxoa messoria*, *Peridroma margaritosa*. I reared *M. vulgaris* from *Feltia ducens* in the summer of 1967.

Figs. 48, 49. *Apanteles griffini*. 48. cephalic structures of final instar larva. 49. cocoon mass.

Figs. 50, 51. *Microplitis kewleyi*. 50. cephalic structures of final instar larva. 51 cocoon.

Figs. 52-55. *Meteorus vulgaris*. 52. cephalic structures of final instar larva. 53. final instar larva. 54. cocoon mass. 55. cocoon.

Scale in millimeters.



3.5 Encyrtidae

3.5.1 *Copidosoma bakeri* (Howard). *Copidosoma bakeri* is probably the most important single parasitoid of *E. ochrogaster* over most of its range. This species was first described in the genus *Berecyntus* and most of the literature associated with this species is found under *Berecyntus bakeri*. Originally *C. bakeri* was described as a single species with several varieties including *gemma* Girault, *arizonensis* Girault, *euxoae* Strickland, and *bakeri* Girault. Other workers gave these varieties subspecific rank (Gibson, 1917; Peck, 1951). Peck (1963) states that *C. bakeri* cannot be subdivided into varieties or subspecies, as the earlier groupings are merely a reflection of color patterns and not of population differences.

Work on the biology and development of *C. bakeri* has been published by various workers (Gibson, 1915; Strickland, 1916; King and Atkinson, 1928; Cook, 1930). The most extensive work done on this species was that of McMillan (1930) in an unpublished masters thesis.

Biology. *C. bakeri* oviposits in the eggs of its many hosts but the host is not killed until the approximate time that host pupation occurs. The polyembryonic development of *C. bakeri* will be discussed later.

McMillan (1930) observed *C. bakeri* adults in the field in central Saskatchewan from early May until the end of August, while I observed them during the latter portion of July and most of August. The great length of time during which adults occur in the field is due to the emergence from different host species completing development at different times during the summer. *C. bakeri* adults emerge from *E. ochrogaster*

larvae at approximately the same time as do the *E. ochrogaster* adults. In the laboratory the maximum time which *C. bakeri* adult females can be kept alive is sixteen days, with a mean of eleven days (McMillan, 1930). It is likely that eggs of *E. ochrogaster* are exposed to only a small portion of the *C. bakeri* adults which emerged from *E. ochrogaster* larvae because of the long preoviposition period of *E. ochrogaster* females. A detailed biology of adult *C. bakeri* may be found in McMillan (1930).

The parasitic egg develops for approximately 45 days within the host egg till it reaches an overwintering stage. During this time it has approximately doubled in size and is transformed into a syncytium of cleavage nuclei surrounded by a trophamnion (McMillan, 1930). The trophamnion provides nutriment for the embryonic mass from the host tissues as the eggs of polyembryonic parasitoids are relatively free of yolk (Chapman, 1969). After the host emerges from its egg, the growth of the polyembryonic mass resumes. The actual mechanism of polyembryonic development is described by McMillan (1930) and Leiby (1922).

The earliest that a polyembryonic body (p.e.b.) was detected in my dissections of red-backed cutworms was in the third instar of the host. The polyembryonic body at this time is very small, compact and is usually flattened and little internal differentiation is apparent. It grows in size in the next instars of the host until it fills a major portion of the area between the gut and the muscle layer under the integument. At this point it may be present as a simple flattened structure or it may be lobed or divided into smaller bodies. If more than one p.e.b. is present in the host then one is

usually much more developed than the other. There were never two distinct p.e.b.'s in the same area of the host's body. The body remains largely undifferentiated until either the sixth or seventh instar of the host, depending upon whether an extra instar occurs. The p.e.b. then begins to divide into smaller embryonic units which are marked by density changes in the p.e.b. These embryonic units change to spherical structures and give the entire p.e.b. the appearance of a bag of marbles. These structures change into the form of larvae while still in the intact p.e.b. The p.e.b. in the meantime becomes larger and more deformed till it is very lobed. When the larvae are fully developed within the body, they begin to escape from it. Several dissections were made at the time when the p.e.b. had begun to disintegrate and the larvae spread throughout the host body. Not all the larvae appeared to leave the p.e.b. simultaneously; in fact, some of the remaining larvae were less developed and likely did not complete their development before the earlier-developing larvae destroyed both the host and the remains of the p.e.b. Occasionally, some larvae were found free of the p.e.b. before the majority of the larvae were mature enough to leave the p.e.b. These likely correspond to the pseudolarvae referred to by Leiby (1922, 1926). The pseudolarvae are actually larvae which failed to obtain sufficient nutrition while in the p.e.b., and will not survive to the pupal stage.

Once the larvae break free of the p.e.b., they begin to actively ingest the host body contents. This is a very rapid process taking two to four days.

The behaviour of the host changes radically during the last

stages of intact p.e.b. and the beginning of the parasitoid larval attack. The host eats more during the last period than does the normal cutworm (McMillan, 1930). As the p.e.b. breaks down the host is very active and restless. Strong turning and twisting activity is often noticed. Feeding ceases during this period. The parasitoid larvae distribute themselves throughout the body and rapidly destroy the internal organs leaving the external musculature and nerve network until last. The host is usually capable of reflexes ie. curling movements even if the entire internal structure is destroyed. Finally, the muscles, brain, and nervous system are eaten leaving only a 'plastic' bag of host integument full of parasitoid larvae. In one case, even this integument bag was destroyed. The external appearance also changes radically from the attack of the larvae. Sometimes the intact p.e.b. can be seen through the intersegmental membranes of the host as a solid white mass which does not move like the surrounding fat body. The host at this stage is a typical dorsal red and ventral clear light grey. The crawling and curling movements appear normal. As the p.e.b. begins to break down, the color of the body changes. The reds become lighter and pass through a pale pink and then become an off-grey. The ventral surface changes from the clear grey to a mottled grey as the parasitoid larvae can be seen through the integument (fig. 59). As the last muscle and nerve tissue is destroyed, a fluid discharge is emitted from the body of the host which leaves a brown stain on the filter paper of a culture dish. The host is now a uniform buff-grey shade and the larvae are packed into every portion of the body including the prolegs, brain and eyes (fig. 58). The body of the host sags to the

most stable shape, which in culture dishes fits the pattern of the objects on which it lies. Specimens found in the field were flattened, screw-shaped, or almost normally curved. The *C. bakeri* larvae pupate within two days of the host body collapse.

As the pupae mature, the color of the host carcass darkened noticeably due to the color change of the individual pupae. After 14 to 26 days the adults emerge in a period of 6 to 12 hours. The host carcass is perforated with holes on all sides except the bottom. Each adult does not form a new hole but will use an old hole if one exists near it. After emergence the host resumes a dull grey or tan color.

The individual larvae (fig. 56) of *C. bakeri* have very few distinctive characters. McMillan gives a figure of the mandibles of the larvae, but I found the mandibles so hard to obtain and study that I regard them as being essentially useless as an identifying character. *C. bakeri* larvae are easily distinguished from other larvae likely to be found attacking *E. ochrogaster* by their great numbers and by their lack of sclerotized characters. Late larvae or prepupae (fig. 57) are also easily recognized as the host is essentially destroyed by the time of their appearance.

Hosts. *C. bakeri* has a wide range of natural hosts. The following hosts were recorded by Peck (1963) with the authors he cited and additional references which I found. Location by province or state is included to provide additional information on the distribution of both the host and the parasitoid: a. *Agrotis orthogonia* (Cook, 1930), Montana; b. *A. venerabilis* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; c. *Amathes smithi* (Wood and Nielson, 1957), New Brunswick; d. *Chorizagrotis*

auxiliaris (Strickland, 1916), Alberta, (Girault, 1917), Alberta, (Snow, 1925), Utah, (Walkden, 1950), Kansas; e. *C. thanatologia* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; f. *Chorizagrotis* sp. (Girault, 1916), Arizona; g. *Crymoides devastator* (Gibson, 1915, 1917), Ontario; (Girault, 1916), Ontario; h. *Euxoa detersa* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; i. *E. flavicollis* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; j. *E. intrita* (Cook, 1930), Montana; k. *E. messoria* (Walkden, 1950), Kansas; l. *E. ochrogaster* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; m. *E. scandens* (Walkden, 1950), Kansas; n. *E. tristicula* (Strickland, 1921), (Whitehouse, 1922), Alberta; (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; o. *Euxoa*. sp. (Girault, 1916), Ontario; (Gibson, 1917), Ontario; p. *Feltia ducens* (King and Atkinson, 1928), Saskatchewan; q. *Feltia subgothica* (Walkden, 1943, 1950), Kansas; (Peck, 1951), Kansas, Alberta, New Mexico, r. *Lacinopolia renigera* (Walkden, 1950), Kansas, s. *Pissodes strobi* (Taylor, 1929), Mass.; t. *Hadena devastatrix* (Treherne, 1915, Gibson, 1916), Ontario.

McMillan's thesis lists nine of the above species as hosts of *C. bakeri*. In addition six more species are given in which parasitism was induced successfully. They are *Euxoa tessellata*, *E. verticallis*, *E. dargo*, *E. divergens*, *E. campestris*, *Poliarenigera* sp. McMillan felt that natural parasitism does not occur in these species because they normally lay their eggs in hard packed prairie soil. He proved that firmly packed soil provides an effective barrier to *C. bakeri* oviposition.

Of the twenty species which I have listed as recorded hosts, I believe that one is definitely in error. The species *Pissodes strobi*, the white pine weevil, attacks the shoots of white pine trees (*Pinus*

strobilus). The list from which Peck (1963) derived his information is headed 'Parasites reared from *P. strobili* or weeviled material' (Taylor, 1929) and is data from several different workers. All other recorded hosts are cutworms which are typically found in open areas and whose eggs are laid on or near the soil, while *P. strobili* is a weevil and occurs in wooded areas. Also, *P. strobili* lays its eggs in the tips of white pine shoots so that it is very unlikely that one parasitoid would attack such a wide range of hosts in such divergent habitats.

During the present study *C. bakeri* was reared from *Feltia ducens* during the summer of 1967, and from *E. ochrogaster* in 1967 and 1968 and was dissected from *E. ochrogaster* larvae in 1969.

3.6 *Euxoa ochrogaster* pupal remains

One useful character which has not been discussed adequately yet is the appearance of the pupa before and after the parasitoids emerge. Fig. 60 shows a typical pupa which would produce an *E. ochrogaster* adult. Directly after the prepupa has molted to the pupa, the cuticle is a pale off-white. The cuticle darkens quickly to a light brown and remains this color. As the normal pupa develops, it gradually darkens and shortens until just before emergence, when it is very black and the surface is distorted. The adult emerges through the dorsal side and many of the sutures release, leaving the pupal remains badly damaged. The abdominal segments of the pupa are often telescoped anteriorly at emergence (Fig. 61). After emergence, the pupa returns to a light brown color.

When the cutworm is attacked by *Gonia* sp., the pupa darkens to a deep brown because of the presence of the puparium. The emerging adult causes a transverse break across the head of the host pupa. (Fig. 62). The break usually closes and the host pupa remains intact. The abdominal segments remain very much like those of a normal pupa. In some specimens, the host pupa is expanded around the puparium and is slightly collapsed directly behind it. The appearance of the pupa after *Gravenhorstia propinqua* (Fig. 65) emerges is described adequately above.

The ichneumonine species and their influence on the pupa were described above. It should be noted here however, that the abdominal segments are extended further in ichneumonine-attacked specimens, (Fig. 64) than in normal pupae.

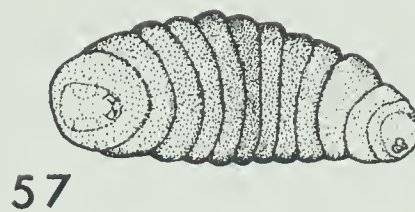
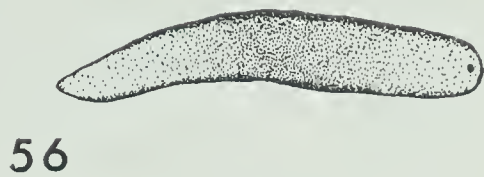
Only one specimen of a pupa attacked by *Poecilanthrax alcyon* (Fig. 63) was examined. This specimen was a light brown similar to one from which a moth had emerged. The adult *P. alcyon* emerges from the dorsal surface behind the head, leaving the pupa intact. The abdominal segments are fully extended after emergence.

While only one of the species, *G. propinqua*, leaves truly distinctive pupal remains, the appearance of these remains allows one to analyze which group of species had attacked the pupa. If it is known which of the species within each group is the most common, additional data are available on their influence upon host population structures.

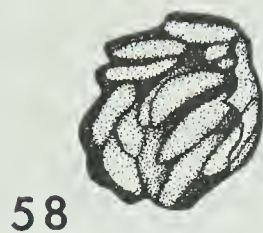
Figs. 56-59. *Copidosoma bakeri*. 56. feeding larva. 57. prepupa.
58. cross-section of host at completion of *C. bakeri* feeding.
59. surface view of above.

Figs. 60-65. *E. ochrogaster* pupae. 60. normal before moth
emergence. 61. normal after moth emergence. 62. after *Gonia* spp.
emergence. 63. after *Poecilanthrax alcyon* emergence. 64. after
ichneumonine emergence. 65. after *Gravenhorstia propingua*
emergence.

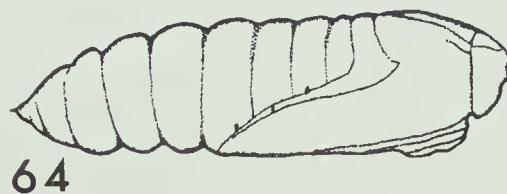
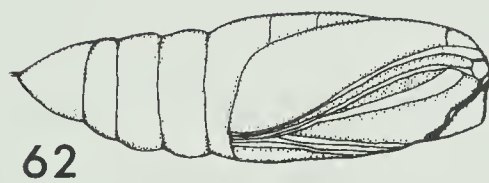
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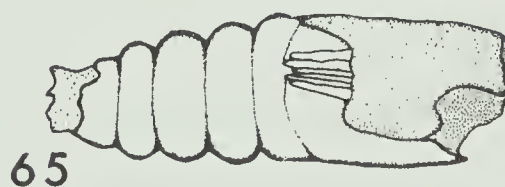
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4. Discussion

Twenty-seven species of parasitoids have been recorded as being reared from *Euxoa ochrogaster*. In this study I have shown that three of these records, *Gonia capitata*, *Apanteles acronyctae*, and *Meteorus dimidiatus* are incorrect. Of the twenty-four species of confirmed parasitoids, the immature stages of fifteen are described. Of the remaining species, Brooks (1952) has provided descriptions of four of the bombyliids. *Pseudamblyteles subfuscus* and *Gonia* sp. were not described as I was not able to find what species these records are now valid for and thus could not locate specimens. *Gonia fuscicollis*, *Villa lateralis*, and *Aganermis* sp. were not described because I could obtain no specimens of any of the immature stages. Because of the possibility that both *Periscepsia laevigata* and *Gonia sequax* are parasitoids of the red-backed cutworm, descriptions of the available immature stages of these species have been included.

The known biology of each species of parasitoid is given in the text and some of this information is summarized in Table 1. It should be noted that the stage of the host in which the parasitoid lays its egg was determined either by literature records or by using rearing data from field-collected specimens. The earliest instars selected by the parasitoid can be calculated by determining both the instar and the time of the season in which the host, which later produced a parasitoid, was captured. The latest instars can be found by dissections of host material and sometimes by observing the oviposition behaviour of the parasitoid. For example, no specimens of the red-backed cutworm collected before the fourth instar produced ichneumonine adults. When sixth instar cutworms were attacked

Table I. Summary of the biology of *E. ochrogaster* parasitoids.

Species	Status	stage attacked	stage killed	No. of known hosts
<i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	2
<i>Gonia capitata</i>	rejected	-	-	-
<i>Gonia fuscicollis</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	1
<i>Gonia sequax</i>	suspected	IV,V,VI	pupa	1
<i>Bonnetia comta</i>	confirmed	III, IV	prepupa	7
<i>Periscepsia helymus</i>	confirmed	larva	VI	17
<i>Periscepsia laevigata</i>	suspected	larva	V	5
<i>Villa alternata</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	6
<i>Villa fulviana</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	1
<i>Villa lateralis</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	1
<i>Villa moroides</i>	hyper parasitoid	-	-	-
<i>Poecilanthrax alcyon</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	5
<i>Poecilanthrax willistonii</i>	confirmed	IV,V,VI	pupa	9
<i>Eutanyacra suturalis</i>	confirmed	IV,V,?VI	pupa	4
<i>Diphyus</i> #1	confirmed	IV,V,?VI	pupa	3

(continued)

Table I. (continued)

Species	Status	stage attached	stage killed	No. of known hosts
<i>Spilichneumon superbus</i>	confirmed	IV,V,?VI	pupa	6
<i>Pseudamblyteles subfuscus</i>	?	-	-	-
<i>Camponotus atkinsoni</i>	confirmed	I,II	III, IV	1
<i>Netelia</i> sp.	confirmed	V,VI	prepupa	-
<i>Gravenhorstia propingua</i>	confirmed	larva	pupa	1
<i>Apanteles acronyctae</i>	rejected	-	-	-
<i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	confirmed	II,III	V	8
<i>Apanteles griffini</i>	confirmed	?II,III	?V	4
<i>Microplitis kewleyi</i>	confirmed	?III,IV	?IV,V	1
<i>Meteorus vulgaris</i>	confirmed	III,IV	VI	14
<i>Meteorus dimidiatus</i>	rejected	-	-	-
<i>Copidosoma bakeri</i>	confirmed	egg	VI or VII	19
<i>Aganermis</i> sp.	confirmed	?	V	-

in the laboratory, the ichneumonine females were unable to successfully lay eggs in the host because of its defense reactions.

Figure 66 summarizes the parasitoid complex and the stages at which the parasitoid eggs are laid and those at which the hosts are killed.

4.1 Further research needed

To complete this study, further detailed research is needed in several groups. The genus *Gonia* is now very poorly understood and needs intensive research. While only two species of *Gonia* are definitely recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster*, both Strickland (1923) and King and Atkinson (1928) noted that several species were found in their work. The presently described species likely contain more than one species, as was shown in *Gonia aldrichi*. Until more is known about the species composition of this genus, little valid work will be possible in evaluating its role in regulating *E. ochrogaster* populations.

The ichneumonines need further work before all of the actual species of parasitoids in this group which attack *E. ochrogaster* are recognized. I believe that species other than those which I have described should be easily recognized. The main difficulty lies in the present *Diphyus* and *Pseudamblyteles* confusion. Until this genus is reworked, we will have no idea of what the species *P. subfuscus* now means.

One further genus in which more species need to be described and recorded is *Apanteles*. I believe that more than just the two valid records are actually parasitoids of *E. ochrogaster*. If a species of *Apanteles* shows consistent differences from the characteristics which I described, especially in the form of the cocoon mass, it is likely neither *A. laeviceps* nor *A. griffini* and should be regarded as a new record needing identification.

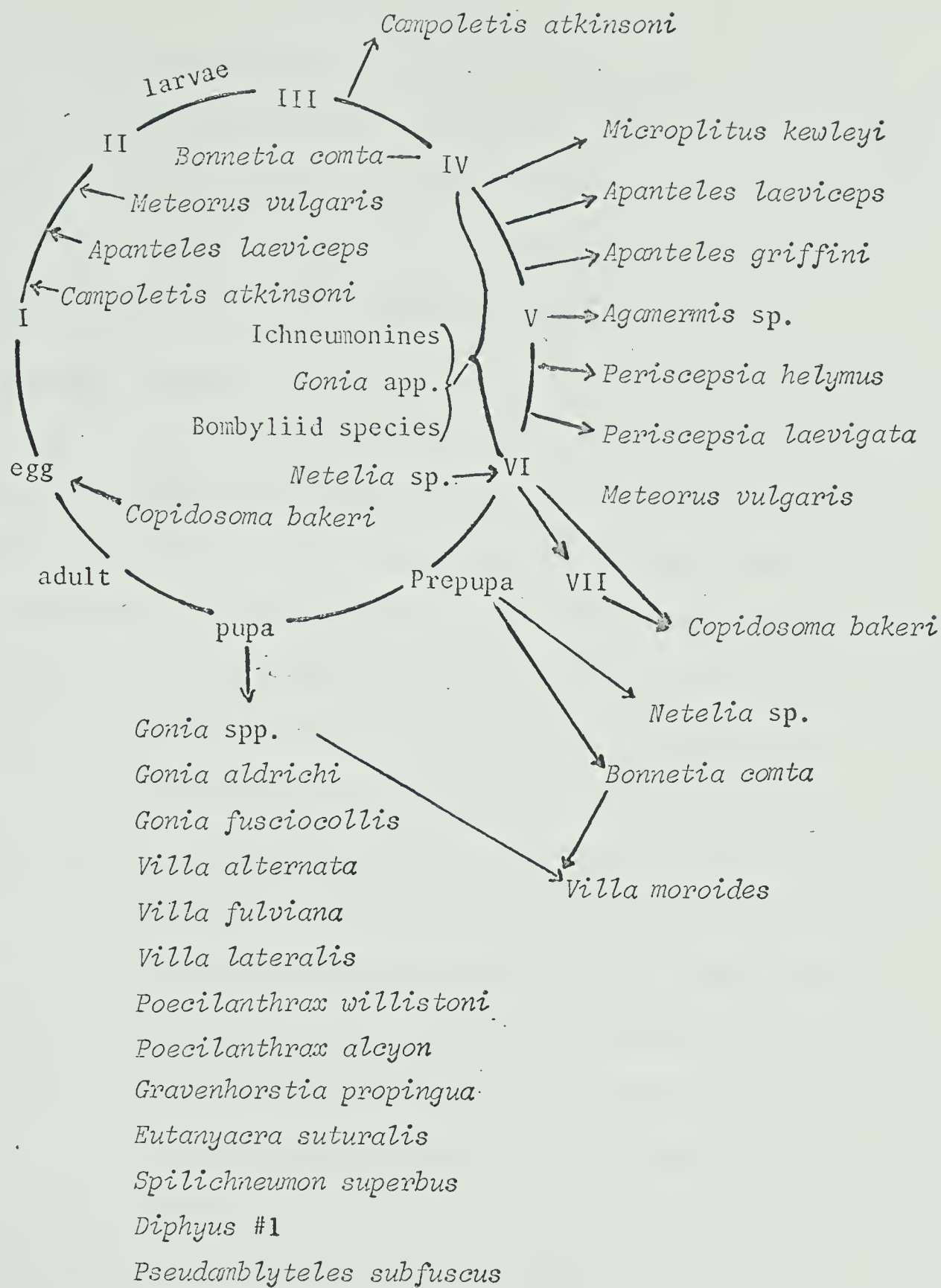


Fig. 66. The parasitoid complex of *Euoxa ochrogaster*. Arrows entering the circle indicate oviposition by the parasitoids. Arrows leaving the circle indicate the stage at which the host is killed.

As will be explained later, I am sure that in areas where *E. ochrogaster* is not common or where it has not been adequately studied, several new species of parasitoids will be found. Additional species attacking *E. ochrogaster* from the prairie provinces of Canada are possible but will likely be of minor importance.

4.2 Alternative hosts

Except for the less-well-known species of parasitoids in this study, all have several hosts from which they have been reared and recorded. Indubitably, for each of these species of parasitoids, there are more hosts which have yet to be recorded. Most host records for parasitoids result from the rearing of economic species, and there is little reason to suspect that these parasitoids attack only hosts which are of economic value. With the exception of *Villa alternata*, all parasitoids recorded as being reared from *E. ochrogaster* were mainly restricted to noctuid larvae as additional hosts. I believe it is necessary to consider the type of habitat in which all of the species in this complicated host-parasitoid complex existed before agricultural practices modified large areas. It is likely that large numbers of cutworm species existed in low densities in the prairie and parkland areas of Canada. The densities of individual host species were likely low enough to prevent host-parasitoid complexes restricted to small numbers of species from occurring. In order to survive, each parasitoid species probably had to attack any host in a given taxonomic range in a given habitat type. The hosts of some of the species include ground cutworms and climbing cutworms which are found in grasslands, fields or low bush open areas.

Cutworms such as *E. ochrogaster* were likely adapted to feeding in

areas of recently disturbed soil. This is reflected by the preference of the female to lay her eggs in loose soil. One of the parasitoids, *Copidosoma bakeri*, is also restricted to areas of loose soil. McMillan (1930) showed that *C. bakeri* was capable of completing development in species normally found only in packed soil but that in the field they are unable to penetrate the soil and find the eggs. It is likely that the high degree of polyembryony in *C. bakeri* is the result of the unstable nature of the habitat it requires and the relative difficulty of finding such a habitat. As agriculture has increased the amount of disturbed soil and at the same time made the cutworm habitat more stable, the densities of both the host species and their parasitoids have probably increased.

4.3 Regulation of *E. ochrogaster* populations by parasitoids.

Nine species of parasitoids were reared from *E. ochrogaster* during this study. The estimated percentages of hosts killed in the 1967 and 1968 seasons are given in Table II. These estimates were calculated using the number of hosts killed by a parasitoid (or which contained immature stages of that parasitoid) out of the total number of hosts entering the stage which the parasitoid normally killed. As was found by King and Atkinson (1928), *Gonia aldrichi*, *Meteorus vulgaris*, *Campoletis atkinsoni*, and *Copidosoma bakeri* were important parasitoids. Interestingly, King and Atkinson found no ichneumonine species as parasitoids of *E. ochrogaster*, while I found three. Of these, *Spilichneumon superbus* was the most important species and *Diphyus* #1 may be important in other years. The total ichneumonine complex is an important regulatory factor in the population fluctuations of the red-backed cutworm. *A. laeviceps* was recorded by Strickland (1923) as killing five percent of the red-backed cutworms in

Table II. The estimated mortality caused by the species of parasitoids reared from *E. ochrogaster* at Calahoo in 1967 and 1968.

Species	1967	1968
<i>Gonia aldrichi</i>	5 - 10%	9%
<i>Eutanyacra suturalis</i>	<5%	3%
<i>Diphyus</i> #1	<5%	5%
<i>Spilichneumon superbus</i>	5 - 10%	10%
<i>Campoletis atkinsoni</i>	-	9%
<i>Apanteles laeviceps</i>	≈5%	<1%
<i>Meteorus vulgaris</i>	10%	5%
<i>Copidosoma bakeri</i>	35%	22%
<i>Aganermis</i> sp.	<1%	0

1915 and less than one percent in 1916. In 1967, the number of fifth instar larvae collected was too low to get an estimation of the mortality caused by *A. laeviceps*. In 1968, only one collected red-backed cutworm was killed by *A. laeviceps*. It does not appear as if this species was very important in regulating the numbers of *E. ochrogaster* during 1967 and 1968.

It appears from my study and from the work of King and Atkinson (1928), that the parasitoids are not the chief controlling factors of *E. ochrogaster* populations, but are important regulating factors.

Figure 67 shows the decrease in size of the *E. ochrogaster* population at Calahoo in the summer of 1968. The population estimates were made weekly and were based on twenty one-half square meter samples. These samples were taken using a modified random sampling plan within a 100 quadrat sampling area. The sampling area was 100 meters square. The soil was removed to a depth of fifteen centimeters and sieved using a mechanical shaker.

The decrease shown is far more rapid than if parasitoids were the most important regulating factors. Frank (in press, a) does not feel that carabid predators are the controlling factor either. It is likely that the reduction of population is due to a complex interaction of predators, diseases, and parasitoids. All of these factors are likely directly influenced by the weather conditions within any season. Until more intensive research is carried out on the total regulatory complex, it will be difficult to determine what is the most important controlling factor.

4.3.1 Economic benefits of parasitoids

In addition to analyzing the effect of any parasitoid on the yearly

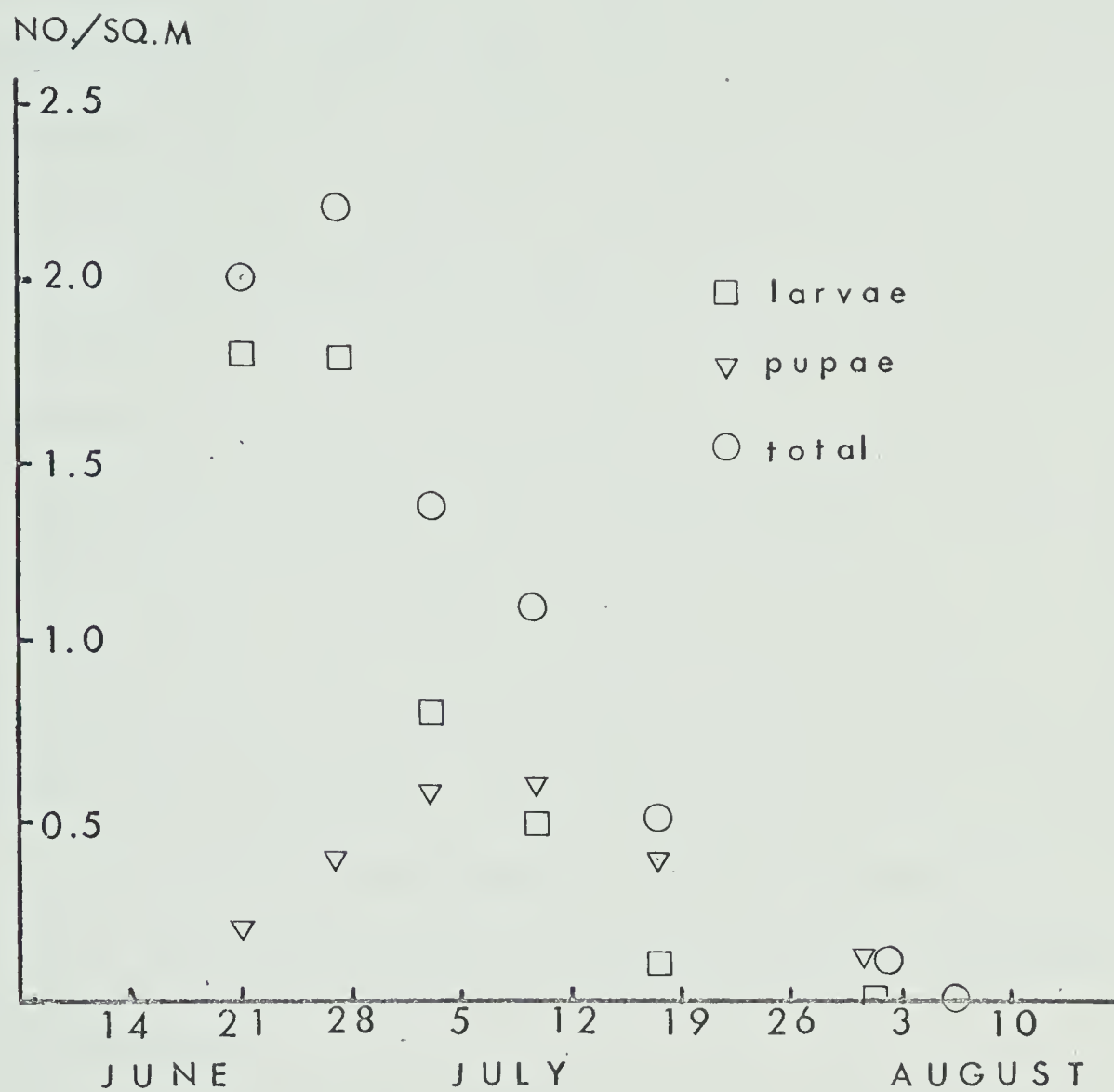


Fig. 67. The decline of the *Euoxa ochrogaster* population at Calahoo, Alberta in the summer of 1968.

population fluctuations of *E. ochrogaster* the influence of this parasitoid on the amount of damage caused in any given year must be considered. To reduce the damage done, feeding by the cutworms must be reduced or prevented. Because it kills the early instar larvae, *Compoletis atkinsoni* essentially prevents economic damage, and its rate of killing hosts is its rate of economic return. *Apanteles laeviceps*, which kills during the host's fifth instar, reduces the damage done by the hosts which it attacks. *A. laeviceps* has shown a very low rate of attack during my study. While *C. atkinsoni* and *A. laeviceps* reduce the loss caused by their hosts, *Copidosoma bakeri* increases the loss by the current generation. McMillan (1930) found that hosts attacked by *C. bakeri* consumed 27.5% more food than did normal hosts. If a seventh instar occurs, this extends the feeding period of each host. As *C. bakeri* attacks at a fairly high rate, the increased loss due to its presence probably exceeds that prevented by *C. atkinsoni* and *A. laeviceps*. The other parasitoids kill at such low rates, or kill after the host damage has occurred and appear to be economically neutral, i.e., they neither increase nor decrease the loss during that season.

4.4 Future research

The basic approach of this study has been to study all of the known parasitoids of *E. ochrogaster* over its geographic range. The knowledge of the parasitoid complex is a reflection of the area where this host is most commonly a pest, namely western Canada. It appears that *E. ochrogaster*, or in fact any economic cutworm, is attacked by the normal parasitoid complex which attack cutworms. The parasitoid complex of any given host could change or be very different in different regions. I believe that it is very difficult at this point to study all the parasitoids of any host

which covers a wide geographic range.

I believe that a more valuable approach may be to study the complex of hosts and parasitoids in any given region. In such a study, all of the parasitoids of all the cutworm hosts which are found in that region would be studied and described. As a result of such a study, all the potential parasitoids of any cutworm species found within that region would be known. The advantages of such an approach are that when any one species is studied some of its actual parasitoids may not be present in sampled populations. If several species of hosts are studied then any one parasitoid is less likely to be overlooked and thus will be recognized in a future outbreak of cutworms. Also, if a different species of cutworm appears in a region, most of the potential parasitoids will be easily recognized, allowing a meaningful analysis of the role of the parasitoids as regulation factors.

Over a period of time and after different cutworm species have been studied, much data should accumulate as to what factors regulate parasitoid populations and their ability to influence the populations of their various hosts.

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